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LEAVES

FROM A

LADY'S DIARY.

VOL. II.

LEAVES

FROM A

LADY'S DIARY

OF

HER TRAVELS

IN

BARBARY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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LEAVES

FROM THE

DIARY OF A LADY'S TOUR

IN

BARBARY.

I.

Excursion to Ruisseau d'Or—Wayfaring troubles.

Ruisseau d'Or, Feb. 5th.

SMALL rosy clouds at dawn betokened that the sky had concluded a truce with the earth, and that the latter should again rejoice in the cheering beams of the sun after the many days of deluge it had endured. We persisted, therefore, in our resolution. The Captain was with us at nine o'clock, and after warmly expressing our gratitude to his amiable family for the many friendly attentions they had shown us, we rode from Guelma escorted by him and his two spahis. The landscape was as fresh and as lovely as a rose new washed in morning dew; it struck me that the early

African spring had come down upon it during the night, and a return to Bona under such circumstances seemed to me very premature. "Change your plan," suddenly began the Captain, as though he guessed my thoughts; "permit me to be your guide to Hammam Mescutine, and we shall get back this evening to Guelma, where you can rest and refresh yourself for some days longer. Meanwhile the plain will have dried, so that I shall be able to make my two or three hundred spahis manœuvre before you in the best style, and after we shall have treated you to that interesting spectacle, the best we can offer you in these out of the way quarters, you may begin your return journey." The proposal was very tempting, but our fear lest the weather should change again, and keep us prisoners perhaps for some weeks in Guelma, added to our great unwillingness to abuse the excessive hospitality of our good friends, made us abide by our first plan. We promised the Captain, however, that in case we should not proceed directly to Malta, but were obliged to touch again at Bona in coasting along the African shore, we should pay him another visit in a better season of the year. Meanwhile we reached the Seybouse, where we were to part. There are moments when total silence is more eloquent than the finest words, and so we felt now. The Captain pressed my hand to his lips, grasped those of F—— and T——, and bidding us not forget the exile of Guelma, he was gone before one of us could utter a word in reply. I

do hope we shall again encounter him and his in some of our sea-trips.

I have written so much of bad roads, that I may spare myself the trouble of describing that which we travelled over to-day. The Captain had scarcely left us before the sky became overcast, and a howling storm came on with floods of rain. Our destination was le Ruisseau d'Or, and as we had already passed Nechmeia, we had nothing left for it but to trudge bravely onward. Having a long way before us, we drew out our mackintoshes to prepare for a downright rainy day; but the simple act of putting them on was one that taxed all our skill and strength, for the plashy ground made it impossible to dismount, and the wind impeded every movement on horseback. Whilst I was occupied in this important operation, my poor little dog succeeded, after many ineffectual attempts, in springing out of the mire into my lap, where I was obliged to keep the poor shivering wretch, under my mackintosh, all the way to Ruisseau d'Or. The worst part of the matter was the labour of holding him fast, for a small valise which was attached to my saddle, and which contained my whole travelling wardrobe, rendered my seat by no means convenient, and we had to leap ditches, ford deep, rapid streams, and make way down steep declivities and over rocky ground, through the heaviest rain and most cutting wind. Whilst we were in this pleasant predicament, F—— took it into his head to cut up a pasty on

horseback, and tried to persuade me to take a portion of it, as if I had a hundred hands.

We were told that Nebac, one of our spahis, understood French, and it turned out that he could do so just enough to make me understand that a few days previously a couple of Maltese, who had 1000 francs upon them, were robbed and murdered by the Arabs, between Nechmeia and Ruisseau d'Or. To make this news the more disagreeable, I knew that he had left his gun behind at Nechmeia. He concluded his story by coolly remarking, that the wild beasts by night, and the Arabs by day, were often very pernicious to the traveller; but that the latter might comfort himself with the assurance, that he had nothing to fear by night from the Arabs, or by day from the wild beasts.

After eight hours' riding, during the last four of which the rain never ceased for a moment, we reached Ruisseau d'Or at four o'clock, in an undescribably piteous plight. We now learned how magically the Captain's presence had operated in our former visit to the place, and what treatment we should have had without him from the innkeeper. All our prayers and supplications were unavailing to obtain us a room, and we were not even vouchsafed the use of a fire to dry our wet and mud-plastered garments. There we stood, dripping wet, in a great doorless, windy room, that served at once for vestibule, kitchen, and reception-hall. One would hardly imagine the sort of

place in which we sought an asylum—a deep cellar, from which, however, I was soon driven back by a most disgusting spectacle. Our host had just concluded a bargain with an Arab, who had delivered to him for five francs a newly-killed boar, and the big brute, which somehow scarcely appeared to me to be as dead as I could wish, had been carried down into the cellar, where the innkeeper was in the act of stripping off its bristly coat, and preparing cutlets from it for our supper. It seems strange that the Arabs should sell for so ridiculously small a price an animal that would cost as many pounds in England. But the Mussulman is forbidden to eat swineflesh, as unclean; and as boars are very numerous in these parts, and are very easily killed, they are often disposed of for less than five francs.

After repeated entreaties, the brute of an innkeeper at last relented so far as to assign us a couple of wretched rooms, in one of which I am now writing, whilst F—— and T—— are supping below on the fresh cutlets of the boar, the only eatable thing to be had here to-day. I have asked in vain for an egg or a drop of milk to cool my parched throat; I might as well have asked for Indian birds' nests. T—— and F—— are just come up, and assure me that the boar-cutlets were very good; they were not at all like the flesh of the wild swine, which is common in Italy, but like fine white firm veal. A pair of tongs, a pair of bellows, or a shoe-brush, is

here an unknown article of luxury; and if you ask for a light, they give you a very meagre dip-candle, which, for want of a candlestick, you must stick either on your head-dress, as the Arabs do, or in one of your button-holes, for you cannot have even a bottle to serve the turn.

II.

Dreary, drenched and delirious—Commissariat—Knavish innkeeper—Travelling acquaintances—Bedouin tenderness—The ibis.

Bona, Feb. 7th.

THANK Heavens! back again in Bona! I had prepared myself for no very comfortable night at Ruisseau d'Or; but that I should be pinned to my bed there for thirty-six hours instead of eight, was what I had not anticipated. I had not long lain down before I was in a violent fever. I became delirious, and my excited imagination placed me again on board the Euphrates. The ship was wrecked; our last hour was come; the wild cry of the perishing crew, the disregarded orders of the despairing officers, the roaring of the billows, and the crashing of the masts and timbers, were all so distinctly audible to me, and filled me with such horror, that I longed for the moment when the yawning abyss should close over me, and shut me out from such pain. Then came a change, and I found myself by the enchanted fountains of

Hammam Mescutine, only everything was much more beautiful and fairy-like than any description I had heard of them. I fancied myself in a paradise, where soul and body were freed from all earthly woes, and pure strains of angelic music wrapped me in sweet slumber, until the mere thought that this heavenly state might pass away too soon filled me with anguish. All then vanished, and I found myself in a savage region, in the midst of rushing and roaring streams, precipices, and ravines, surrounded with wild beasts, that gnashed their teeth to devour me; I tried to escape, but my feet seem rooted to the ground. I still see the fiery eyes of a ravening lion that rushed upon me, leaving me no means of escape but by casting myself down a frightful precipice. I felt the hot breath of my fierce pursuer upon me; then I was wet through and through by the spray of the roaring water-fall towards which he drove me; I gave myself up for lost, plunged down the precipice, and, to my great astonishment, awoke in a dark room as day was dawning, on a wretched bed, with a small stream of water spouting down on me from the roof. The cascade that poured upon me incessantly was no phantasm of my fevered imagination, but a reality, which, with four others of its kind, was fast converting our chamber into a bath. So exhausted was I, however, that it was all alike to me. I spread my mackintosh over me, and suspended a great umbrella like a canopy over my bed. I fell asleep for a while, woke when the day was as bright

as it intended to be, and found that my fever was too violent to allow me to rise, much less take the road.

This day seemed to us an eternity of torment. The storm raged, as if the day of judgment were come, and no living thing was to escape its fury. The miserable inn of Ruisseau d'Or was nothing but a great filtering-machine, the water streaming in at the unfinished roof, and out again below. I had now no difficulty in accounting to myself for all my dreams of water. The people of the house were all busy baling, sweeping, plugging, nailing, and otherwise contending against the inundation. The lout of an innkeeper did nothing towards mitigating our annoyances, and our poor horses were left standing in water, without a grain of corn. F—— looked as woe-begone as a man condemned to be hanged, and the night he had passed resembled, by his own account, the agonizing night of the culprit, so beautifully described by Victor Hugo in his "Dernier Jour d'un Condamné." He woke several times out of night-mare sleep, in the firm persuasion that the beasts he heard gnawing in his room were nothing else than lions and tigers, which were sharpening their teeth on his boots and his bedstead before gobbling him up. At last he roused himself, kindled a light, in order to have a look at his foes, and discovered not lions and tigers, but a legion of big rats, that had come to dance around him at the witching time of night. To save me from the drenching to which I

was exposed, F—— and T—— carried me, bed and all, into F——'s rat-room, where I was safe from water at least.

The rain having abated considerably towards evening, F—— equipped himself with a pair of great wooden shoes and a gun, and set out on a little expedition, to discover whether the state of the plain, after such a deluge, would admit of our travelling next day, and whether he could procure a few eggs, or other provisions, for me among the colonists. I had brought all my homœopathic knowledge into operation during the day, and my violent fever had greatly abated, thanks to the repeated use of the invaluable aconite. I was not a little rejoiced when I saw our Spaniard enter the room with twelve eggs, which F—— had found in his tour of discovery at the house of a German colonist, who was very well pleased at the opportunity of selling them to a countryman. But a few minutes afterwards, a great basket containing fifty eggs, with a few lines from an unknown correspondent, was delivered to me, and then I was much disposed to exclaim, like the poor country parson at the birth of his eighth daughter, "O Lord! stop with thy blessings!" An *entrepreneur des transports des provisions militaires,* whom we had known at Guelma, had left Ruisseau d'Or about six hours previously from Dréan, a place about three French leagues distant, on his way to Bona. F—— had commissioned him to send us the military surgeon immediately from Dréan; but that functionary hap-

pened to be absent, and as our friend knew how badly we were provided in all respects at Ruisseau d'Or, he thought that the few fifty eggs would be a little set off for the want of the doctor. We were very much obliged to him, and thought it very considerate in one who was accustomed to purvey for whole armies to condescend upon so small an order as one for fifty eggs. The spahi who brought them to us was afraid to return to Dréan the same night on account of the wild beasts, and so we had to reserve our thanks to our liberal friend until we should meet him at Bona. We had now no easy problem to solve, namely, how to consume two and sixty eggs between that time and the next morning. Our host had behaved so abominably to us, that we would rather have pitched the eggs out of the window than have left them to him; besides which, so large a stock of provisions was too valuable to be lightly dealt with in that land of dearth. If our horses could have eaten eggs, they would have saved us a great deal of trouble. F—— and T—— being in sound condition, had to do their best in the matter, and after they had eaten a supper, consisting of nothing but eggs, cooked in every variety of form, F—— was commissioned to boil the remainder hard, that we might take them with us next day.

A woman, whose husband was servant to the officer of Engineers, and who had rendered me much serviceable aid during the day, complained bitterly of our host. The justice of her complaints was

fully corroborated when we prepared to quit Ruisseau d'Or next morning in murky and threatening weather. It was no easy matter, in fact, to get out of our host's clutches; and it was not until we had paid him one hundred francs, that he would let us out of his thief's den, where my only entertainment had been to lie for thirty-six hours on an execrable bed, drenched with rain-water, and encompassed by countless hosts of rats. Our horses, as we remarked from their languid action, had had nothing but a little straw, with shower and foot-baths *à discrétion*, and the two gentlemen had not been much better treated. To have to pay a hundred francs for all this was atrocious, but there was no help for it, since the innkeeper refused to let us have our horses until he had touched the coin. A few lines of complaint, however, to Captain L——, were a means of punishing the fellow more sorely than the withholding of his demand, and we availed ourselves of it.

The road we had to traverse this day was indescribably bad, and our expedition began with T——'s wretched Rosinante falling, close by the house, with both his hind-legs into two holes several feet deep, which had been dug out for large trees. Two days' abstinence from food, and thirty-six hours of violent fever, had made me so weak that I needed all my courage to undertake a nine hours' journey over the most detestable roads, on the back of a

horse that had had no food for eight-and-forty hours. Cautiously did I let my beast pick his way, exulting in every step that took me further from horrid Ruisseau d'Or, and nearer to our journey's end. The streams were much swollen by the heavy rains. Just as we were about to cross rather a deep stream, I saw a Bedouin catch up Saetta by one of her hind legs, swing her in the air, and deposit her on his neck, with the dexterity of a juggler. At the same moment a military-looking man, whose revolutionary principles were revealed in his *sans culotte* appearance, took my horse by the bridle to lead it safely through the stream. "Who are you, my good man?" I asked this obliging person in French, after he had helped my horse through the water at his own personal risk. "Sono un povero colono," he replied in pure Tuscan, "un povero cantiniere; abito una capannuccia vicina alla osteria del Ruisseau d'Or, &c." Then he went on to say, that having business at Bona, he supposed our Signorie would allow him to travel with us: "giacchè queste stradaccie non essendo troppo secure, si fanno tali viaggi più volontiere in compagnia. Ah cara lei!" he ejaculated, "che guai! che miseria in questi paesi," and then he poured out endless lamentations about all the hardships the colonists had to endure in Africa.

To have found many Spaniards, Germans, Poles, and Hungarians, in Bona would have not much

surprised me; but filled as I am with such a predilection for everything Italian, I was not a little touched at the sight of this poor exile, and expressed to him my astonishment that he could have had the heart to exchange that garden of Europe for the cheerless steppes of Africa, and told him he was very welcome to join our party. The Bedouin, who had taken up Saetta, was his companion, and he too journeyed with us. At every bad spot my povero cantiniere led my horse by the bridle, exclaiming "Ah cara lei, che pericoli per una Signorina come lei!" and Saetta was swung up to her exalted seat on the neck of the Bedouin. The latter was a famous runner. He held a long staff behind his back with both hands, and made such seven-mile steps that our horses could scarcely keep up with him. We Europeans have no idea of what extraordinary things the Arabs can do in this way. "Here are candidates for our hard boiled eggs," I said to F——, who, laden with some thirty of them, did not seem to sit too comfortably on his Rosinante, and was glad to be eased of some of them.

We had hardly ridden two hours before we were overtaken by a continuation of yesterday's rain, which much increased the already sufficient discomforts of the journey. We were compelled to follow the lead of our spahis, though it was pretty obvious to us that they made great deviations from the direct course. Some parts of the vast plain presented the

most melancholy aspect; there was not a bush, not a weed, not a single leaf to be seen within the whole range of vision, only a profusion of large bulbs, like onions, but poisonous for man and beast. By and by the cause of our spahis' circuitous route became apparent to us, for we rode through an endless chain of tribes; and out of the brown tents, rushed every now and then a wife, with her suckling in her arms,—a sister, a mother, or a mother-in-law, and tattered friends innumerable, who gathered round the spahis' horses and stretched out their necks to kiss them. I should not have given credit to these savages, (for I cannot call them anything else) for so much feeling, or at least for so lively an expression of it. Nebac stopped his horse at every encounter, and a regular scene of embracing and osculation took place. This was happening every minute, and though I was pleased at discovering so much affection where I least expected it, still the matter began to be rather serious for us when we considered the patriarchial habits of these tribes, and that if Nebac took it into his head to go his rounds to all the relatives of all his wives, several hours would be consumed in the business. I was glad to see that all the women, young and old, had their faces quite uncovered. It would be indeed too cruel to forbid these poor creatures to draw their breath freely even in the wilderness. This indulgence is not one of the advances in civilization due to

the French, the Bedouin women being always allowed to go with uncovered faces when not within the walls of a town. A sister of Nebac's was not ill-looking: with this exception, we saw no passable face among the ragged and tattered gathering.

Nebac assured us it would be impossible to return by the way we had come from Guelma. We soon passed the Great Salt Lake of Fezzara, which we had previously seen from a height near Nechmeia. We several times rode through vast sheets of water, that seemed bounded only by the sky. The sight made me giddy, for I felt as though we were passing through the sea, nor can I conceive how the horses were able to wade through the deep water of so wide a morass. The Lake of Fezzara swarmed with water-fowl, ducks of all kinds, handsome long-legged water-wagtails, sanderlings, plovers, wild-geese and swans, by thousands, and they seemed to be so little persecuted by human intruders on their haunts, that our appearance gave them no concern. By far the handsomest of these birds were the snow-white ibises, which we mistook at first for young storks. The ibis was a sacred bird among the ancient Egyptians, and it is constantly represented with out-spread wings on their architectural remains. A prettier creature it is impossible to imagine, and I could almost believe that new-fallen snow would look grey beside the plumage of this most charming of birds. There was not the slightest speck on

those we saw, though they live constantly in mud and marsh; they hopped over it like elves, with their long thin legs, and seemed hardly to touch the ground. The rest of our journey lay chiefly through the water with which the swollen lake had overflowed all the flat country. My strength was quite spent, when the rain ceased at last; the landscape brightened up, and some Roman and Turkish ruins gave token that Bona was not far off. Our horses seemed reanimated by their approach to home, and stepped out more briskly. A pale gleam of sunshine broke through the dim sky, and a faint rainbow appeared, as a sign of peace, to assure us that our period of suffering was near its end. The favourable omen did not deceive us, for we had soon reached the Constantine gate and found ourselves in Bona.

III.

Bona—Its European aspect—Beautiful scenery.

Feb. 8th.

Now then of Bona, of the pleasantest little town in all Algeria, it is my cue to speak, and not of the barren wilderness that encompasses Guelma. Now that all our perils by land and water have been surmounted, I prize the recollection of the

expedition we have accomplished, and candidly confess that I do not return with perfect good-will to the habits of every-day life, though one sleeps better in a decent bed than in the miserable lairs of Ruisseau d' Or and Nechmeia. An actual garden surrounds Bona, and the lovely hills of the vicinity afford a welcome relief to the eyes, wearied with the monotony of endless plains. Being still much fatigued with our yesterday's toil, we did not get out of doors to-day before four o'clock; but then the air was so mild and balmy, that it seemed as though the season had advanced three months in a night. Such sudden changes remind the traveller that he is in Africa.

The little Turkish walls round Bona are very like those of Pisa. There is little of a purely Arab character to be seen in the town. The *Place d'Armes* especially, is thoroughly modern and European. Only one moss-covered mosque, crowned with a great stork's nest, over which rises the crescent, and the never-failing minaret looking sad and solitary amidst the European buildings, indicate that Bona stands on African ground. A pretty fountain, surrounded with evergreens, adorns the mosque-place, where a remarkably good-looking military band plays every Thursday and Sunday, and where all the officers and the fashionable world of Bona assemble, particularly on those days. Three sides of the square are formed by ranges of substantial European houses, forming

arcades, and numbering among them no few coffee and billiard houses. We went out at the Damrémont gate and followed the French military road. Right and left of it were well-cultivated fields, in some of which the husbandmen were at work. The distant report of the hunter's gun re-echoing again and again through the mountain gorges, the barking of the dogs, the singing of the colonists at work in the fields, the solemn evening calm that lay upon all nature, and the glorious deep blue heavens, spotted with fleecy clouds—what a contrast to the wretched days we had lately seen in our tour from Guelma to Bona! I felt so reanimated by the favourable change in the weather, as though a thousand years could not satisfy my joyous love of existence.

Revelling in this delightful metamorphosis, which all Nature had so rapidly undergone, we sauntered through the valley towards the chain of hills called Edough, a name they derived from large forests, which extend from Cape de Fer to Cape de Garde, and which lay on our right as we rode to Guelma. This wide district is as yet the resort only of wild beasts. Bona promises to become a very important and extensive town, and the country round it well deserves to be called the garden of Algeria.

On our return we found our spahi Nebac waiting to take his leave of us and receive our messages for Captain L——, as he was about to go back next

day to Guelma. We found our hotel in an unusual state of bustle, in consequence of the arrival of some passengers by the steamer from Tunis, which ought to have been here three days sooner. The steamer from Algiers, which had been due six days ago, was obliged to stop at Fort Gênois, on account of the very high sea. Its passengers, all soldiers, were very near losing their lives in the act of disembarkation. It took place at night, and the soldiers being afraid to enter the boat as the sea ran so high, they were flung into the water without further ceremony. It was supposed they could not be drowned; nevertheless, it was a cruel joke for several of these poor fellows, for many of them had the water up to their chins, and after groping their way to land, they had to tramp two miles in cold, wet and darkness, from Fort Gênois to Bona.

IV.

Bona — Its topography—Environs—A fine gentleman innkeeper—Camels.

Feb. 10th.

Bona was erected by the Arabs, in the year 697, upon the ruins of Hippo, the Carthaginian city, of which St. Augustin was bishop. It lies on the north-east of a little bay of the same name, the eastern shore of which is considerably elevated, and affords

some protection to shipping, but not enough to preserve it always during the winter months. Even in summer the harbour is sometimes dangerous; for instance, eleven ships that lay at anchor there, were lost on the night of the 24th of June, 1835. To the south-west, Bona stands almost at the level of the sea, and you step at once from the little landing-place, through the Porte de la Marine, into the town; but as the latter is built on uneven ground, many of the streets are very steep. To the west, finely cultivated fields and tastefully arranged gardens extend, like a broad carpet of bright colours, up to the first range of hills. Northwards stands the Casbah, on the summit of a hill 315 feet above the level of the sea. The approach to it is by a good paved road and a convenient foot-path. Bona has only four gates; that of the Marine, next the landing-place, the Constantine gate in the direction of Guelma, and the Damrémont and Casbah gates, which are near each other. The environs are beautified by Moorish aqueducts, which supplied the town copiously with water, until Ahmed Bey partially destroyed them in 1832, in order to incommode the French garrison. One of the aqueducts has since been repaired by the French, and the fountains of the town have now a full supply.

The country about Bona was formerly so unhealthy, in consequence of the repeated inundations of the Seybouse and other small streams, that one seventh

of the population, on an average, fell victims every year to marsh fever; but the superfluous water has since been diligently withdrawn for agricultural purposes, and thus a double good has been effected; the deadly miasmata have disappeared, and the fertility of the soil has increased in proportion. The whole population of Bona at present amounts to 9,800 souls, a third of whom are natives.

Such is the rich variety displayed in the environs of this town, that one might go over the same ground twenty times, and yet be sure of always finding something new. If our hotel were but half endurable, one might pass some weeks here very pleasantly; but the contemptuous negligence of the landlord is so bad, that it can scarcely be borne. Instead of troubling himself to see that his servants do their duty, he walks up and down in a handsome dressing-gown, smoking his long pipe and playing the fine gentleman. If a traveller has his bed made and his room set to rights once in forty-eight hours, he may consider himself very handsomely treated. Water is not to be thought of; accordingly, between eleven and twelve at night, F—— makes a stolen march, laden with several empty pitchers and battles, to the lower regions, where he has discovered a kind of cistern. Fortunately there are windows to our room, and since I have been in Africa, I have many times been guilty of surprising with an undesired baptism some Bedouin that passed unsuspectingly along.

Going one morning for such a purpose to the window, I witnessed the loading of a train of camels which was going on in the opposite courtyard: several Arabs were engaged in making the ugly, but invaluable creatures kneel down, and then loading them with two large sacks of corn. The poor, ill-fed, close-shorn brutes cried out as if they had been most cruelly used, yet the Arab readily brought them on their knees with a stroke of a small rod; and then two men rolled forward a large sack of corn, which they could not raise from the ground, and fastened it to one side of a pack-saddle that went over the camel's hump. The same was done on the other side, and all this while the creature continued howling and turning his snake-like neck in every direction. As soon as all was over, he got up and went off in silence to his companions, who had been already laden, and were waiting to begin their march to Guelma. Incredible as it may appear, I am assured by trustworthy authority, that these animals commonly carry a burthen of eight hundred pounds. They can go six or seven days without a drop of water, and a very inconsiderable quantity of beans or barley daily is sufficient for them. Those we see here have only one hump, and are properly dromedaries, though they are generally called camels. The animal which Dr. Shaw distinguishes as the swift camel, will cover as much ground in one day as a good horse in eight or ten; but it is rarely to be seen in Barbary.

V.

Puffing in Bona—A grand theatrical entertainment—Fort Gênois.

Feb. 11th.

I HAVE already said more than once that Bona is a pleasing little town where all nature seems to wear a perpetual smile; of amusement, nevertheless, there is very little indeed in the place, and as we have no acquaintances here, we must make the most of such entertainment as is afforded us. It is no wonder, therefore, that instead of going yesterday direct into the breakfast-room, I stood a long while before a great red-lettered play-bill, conning over all the fine things promised therein to the public. Most particularly was I struck by the last announcement: "A la fin du spectacle, une grande volée d'oiseaux, porteuses de fleurs pour les dames, sera lancée dans la salle. Plusieurs auront une bague en or attachée au cou. La salle sera éclairée extraordinairement par des bougies, &c." This was so tempting that we resolved to go. F—— however did more wisely, for he let us go our ways alone through the very narrow dark streets to the so-called theatre, while he sat at home at his ease sipping his tea and reading "Gil Blas." The brilliant "Salle de spectacle éclairée extraordinairement par des bougies" was an old dilapidated house,

and bats were careering about it wildly, dazzled and dismayed by the leaden lustre of the lights which a ragged boy was employed in snuffing. He succeeded so well that he often put them out. A few boards formed the single tier of boxes, and though none of the boxes had doors, yet it was half an hour before we were admitted. Rossini's fine opera, "Il Barbiere di Seviglia" was shockingly mangled. The first act was over when we entered, and our appearance afforded the public much entertainment, as it seemed, in the interval between the acts. All eyes were turned upon us, and the persons passing stood still and seemed to debate with themselves whether they should be content with merely gaping upon us, or should sit down sociably beside us and put us to the question. "I have no change, Sir, but I will bring you the two francs coming to you," said the man who showed us into our stately box, as he put F——'s ten francs in his pocket. That our friend did not keep his word, and never appeared again with the two francs caused us no surprise at all; but when at last the curtain rose and the fine quintet in the second act was begun, I thought I must have laughed out loud on discovering our box-keeper under the cassock of Don Basilio. Whilst Rosina, the Count Bartolo, and Figaro were all screaming together "Cosa veggo! Don Basilio! "Come quà?" I had almost a mind to strike in

and ask Don Basilio what he had done with our two francs. The orchestra consisted of nine soldiers, who sate in their shirt-sleeves like the greater part of the audience.

We had sat out one act of the "Barbiere" and the fourth of "Inez de Castro," and now looked forward to a great treat "une grande volée d'oiseaux, &c." To our dismay the "salle éclairée extraordinairement" grew darker and darker, for the lights had gone out one by one, and only four remained burning. Every one who has been in the Sixtine Chapel at Rome during the Holy Week, knows how impatiently the congregation waits for the extinction of the great pyramid of lights; one of them is extinguished every quarter of an hour, and when the last has been put out the grand music of the *Miserere* begins softly like a choir of angels from on high. Not so on this occasion: I foresaw that when the last of the four lights had expired, all the bats would quit the upper regions and flutter down upon us as a *volée d'oiseaux;* and as the creature is particularly fond of fastening on one's hair, every lady would be soon adorned with one or more of them. Not choosing to stay for that part of the entertainment we left the house, and I returned to the hotel, fully resolved never again to attend a concert or theatre in Africa, where one cannot even make fun of the beggarly performance, so painful is it to think

of the miserable existence which the poor strolling players must endure.

Evening of the 11*th*.—I am just returned from a pretty ride to Fort Gênois. Yesterday we learned by our own experience, that there is no moving in this country, except on horseback. We proposed to make a somewhat longer excursion on foot, but we returned home so dissatisfied with our own snail-like or tortoise-like slowness of pace, that we resolved again to bring into requisition our horses, which had now had rest enough, and to ride out to-day to Fort Gênois. This fortress was built, as the name indicates, by the Genoese, and repaired by Charles V. It lies on the coast, three leagues from Bona, and at least two hundred feet above the shore. We have passed close by it on our way from Philippeville, but have seen nothing of it, the sun not having yet risen. We rode for a little way over a fine sandy shore, strewed with small shells and little bits of old mosaic, glass, and coral. Our road then lay between thickets of oleander, aloes, myrtles, palms, &c., and sometimes ascending, sometimes descending, on the whole rose gradually until we reached the fort. Some pretty flowers, especially a great number of large blue irises, growing among the bushes, told us that we had no more to fear from the harsh blasts of winter. Our appearance at the Fort caused a gathering together of its few inhabitants. A woman who was

owner of a pretty little garden on a steep slope towards the sea, came up amongst the rest to do the honours of the prospect. She advised us to ride to the top of one of the neighbouring hills, on which there was a light-house, and whence we should have a very extensive view, and see not only Cap de Garde but even as far as Philippeville. But this could certainly not have been the case on so dull a day as this; so after strolling about for awhile, and listening to the woman's complaints about the dreary life she led, especially in the long winter evenings, in a place occupied only by a brigadier, some custom-house officers and invalid soldiers, we mounted our horses and rode back to Bona.

VI.

Retaliation—Fresh arrivals.

Feb. 12th.

"WHAT in heaven's name can be the matter?" said I to F—— as I was awaked much earlier than usual this morning, by a noise of hurrying and scurrying, calling, bawling, cursing, and swearing all over the house. Yesterday evening we were the only guests in the hotel, and now it seemed as if a legion of evil spirits had taken possession of it. Far from diminishing, the uproar increased, till at last our door was thrown open, and in rushed all the servants with

distracted looks, and began to carry off all the furniture they could lay hands on. Our joint protests were wholly disregarded. Sofa, table, chairs, and everything portable vanished quickly, and we were left with nothing but our bed and four bare walls. Our own conscience soon explained to us the reasonableness of this visitation, for during the last few days, having the hotel all to ourselves, we had furtively conveyed the furniture of all the rooms into our own. Several passengers were just arrived by the war-steamer from Algiers, and the noise that had roused us from our sleep, was that occasioned by the anger of the new comers on being shown into dark rooms, without a scrap of furniture, and by the bewilderment of the waiters, who knew not how to account for the phenomenon.

In the breakfast-room, where we used to be alone, there appeared four new comers, who talked German, French, and English all at once. The last of these languages I had never before heard spoken in this country, where one is not troubled by the swarms of our good compatriots that overrun all other lands. But if their too frequent appearance spoils one's pleasure in travelling in Europe, on the other hand, one feels but too sorely that the houses of public entertainment in this country have not undergone the rigorous, but beneficent discipline of the English school.

VII.

Disappointments—Misfortune of being born a woman.

Feb. 13th.

THE Fates are certainly not propitious to our departure. Yesterday, such terrible rumours were current here, that if only half of them be true, we shall barely be able to accomplish our journey to Italy, by way of Tunis. The 'Charlemagne' starts for the latter place to-morrow, but the storm is so great, that the vessel will scarcely be able to lie so long in these roads, but must seek shelter at Fort Gênois, where a little bay affords more security, or must even put out into the open sea. We are ready for departure, and if we do not embark soon, the high surf will render it impossible.

You and I are long agreed that it is a misfortune to be born a woman; but it is particularly so in Africa, and if ever I make a second journey hither, I will assuredly follow the example of Laurence, in "Jocelyn," and disguise myself as a man. Yesterday evening F—— was in a coffee-house where the best company assembles, and an old colonel told him that if he had a mind to travel from Bona to Tunis by land, there was now an opportunity of doing so, such as seldom occurred. Some of the first officers in Bona were to be sent thither with a considerable

escort, on account of the Government; and not only was the latter to defray all expenses, but the expedition would pass with the greatest safety, through a highly interesting region, unknown to all travellers. F—— immediately accepted the proposal, and remarked that the plan, he was sure, would afford me much pleasure. "Comment, madame votre épouse voyage avec vous?" exclaimed the old colonel, taking alarm at these words: "impossible! de toute impossibilité! Mon cher Monsieur, ce ne sont pas des voyages que l'on ose entreprendre avec une dame." And so I have lost a fine opportunity, which I am sure I could very well have enjoyed. Have I not reason to wish myself of a different gender?

VIII.

Contretemps—A deluge—Music in Bona—Annida and Unissa.

Feb. 14th.

It is as I had feared. The 'Charlemagne' could not wait her appointed time, in consequence of the violence of the wind, and started for Tunis about midnight; we are, therefore, fixed here for another fortnight, and our first amusement is to unpack all our things, and once more to steal all the furniture out of the other rooms, since for the next fourteen days we shall be the sole occupants of this grand hotel, and fourteen

days, as every body knows, are an eternity when one has neither acquaintance, nor books, nor fine weather.

After all, we are not sorry to have been left behind by the 'Charlemagne,' for the weather exceeds in badness anything we have yet experienced here. The Arabs say they never should have thought so much water could have fallen from the heavens. Really we begin to have too many pains and crosses in this pleasure-tour! When I think of the wreck of the 'Avenger,' I almost fear we shall never have the courage to go on ship-board again.

The whole environs of Bona are under water. It is a curious sight. We went to-day to the top of a small fort at the corner of the quay within the town. Were it not for the Edough Mountains, and the pretty hills on which the interesting ruins of Hippo are situated, we might really fancy ourselves in Holland; for nothing else is to be seen as far as the eye can reach but an immense expanse of water. Not to leave anything untried that might assuage the pains of our captivity, we made a fruitless attempt to procure a pianoforte. The result of our diligent inquiries was only to ascertain the fact that there are but two pianos in the whole town, whereon the whole musical public of Bona play with great social concord, one after the other—Consuls' wives and daughters, Madame la Sous-Directrice de ——, apothecaries, sailors, soldiers, and all who can strum a few notes. We

had not yet, however, exhausted all the amusements of Bona. To-day we enjoyed two great gratifications; these were a visit to a very handsome hound and her pups, and another to two tame sister hyænas, Annida and Unissa. They belong to the childless wife of the keeper of a *café*, whose whole delight seems centred in these horrid brutes, which she has tamed. They are destined for a present to the Duc d'Aumale as soon as they are full grown, which will soon be, as they are now six months old. A sporting-dog has been reared with them, and the three run and play together about the house and the yard. The coffee-keeper's wife fondled the hyænas in a way that astonished and disgusted me, letting the brutes take pieces of sugar out of her mouth, and *vice versâ*. The hyænas drank a mixture of brandy and syrup out of a saucer, with as much relish as Saetta takes her milk for breakfast. The *café*-keeper had obtained them when they were but fourteen days old, and his wife had fed them with milk and flour. A large pot was simmering on the fire with several pounds of meat for Annida and Unissa, whose case might well excite the envy of many a poor Bedouin. Ugly and treacherous as these brutes appeared, they were not quite so repulsive as I had previously supposed. Their colour is like the wolf's, yellowish grey, with black stripes; the hair on the back is much thicker, and very bristly, and they have a black band round the under part of the neck. Their hind-legs are very much bent, and somewhat

smaller than the fore-legs; their snouts are like the hound's, and the expression of their countenances, especially when they lay back their ears, greatly resembles that of the polar-bear, and is, I think, the most unpleasant thing about them. Their treacherous, demure look is very peculiar, and probably derives much of its character from the fact that no part of the white of their eyes is to be seen.

IX.

Effect of the inundation—Royal stud.

Feb. 19th.

I THOUGHT I had closed my account with the bad weather for the remainder of this winter, but I find myself again surrounded by all its horrors. The devastations caused by the inundation are incredible; Noah scarcely witnessed any greater when he stepped out of the ark. We made an attempt some days ago to reach the bridge of Hippo, but it was impossible, for the road was deep under water. The whole seashore was strewn with dead horses, camels, and asses; and the ruined houses of the poor colonists, and the half-swimming cabins of the Arabs, presented, if possible, a still sadder spectacle.

Yesterday the weather cleared up a little, and we took the opportunity to ride to the royal stables near

the iron-foundry of M. de Bassano, on the road to Guelma. Four-and-twenty fine stallions, recently presented to the French Government by the Bey of Tunis, are kept here; but they were out for an airing when we arrived, and we only saw their neat and well-kept stalls. The mares used for breeding remain with their owners, and the Arab who rears the finest foal receives a considerable premium upon the certificate of the French Commission. The French Government is really doing its utmost for improving the breed of horses, and the consequence is that there is not to be seen here, I will not say a bad horse, but one that would not attract attention in Europe; and very often they are ridden by ragged Bedouins or poor soldiers.

Just as we came out from the stables, some large heavy drops fell from the murky sky, and before we could unroll our waterproof cloaks, a tremendous rain poured upon us. I began almost to think it was written in the book of our fate that we should not get back that day to Bona; for first T—— lost his handsome English whip, and of course we turned back; but no sooner had we found it, than the dog was gone, and we had to gallop about after it in all directions. The dog was found, and then our cloak-straps were missing; and during all these extra tours it thundered, lightened, and hailed, as it does with us in March. It was almost night when we got back to the hotel, wet to the skin.

X.

Odorous state of Tunis—Ruins of Hippo—Monument of St. Augustin—Panoramic view.

Feb. 24th.

THREE days ago the steamer 'Charlemagne' came back from Tunis, and the room where we breakfast and dine was again enlivened by the presence of a few travellers. The accounts they give of Tunis, however, are very discouraging. I cannot venture to repeat the comparison which one of these gentlemen made respecting the streets of that city. The filth in them is said to be unparalleled, both in quantity and quality, beyond what any one could conceive who had not seen it. Three fourths of the population go about the streets on stilts, stirring up such exhalations as rise from the foulest sewers. Pleasant anticipations these, and yet I say: Would we were there! But for the present I have to talk of Hippo, the pearl of the environs of Bona.

On a little plateau, near the highest point of the hill, where stood the ancient town, a monument has been erected by Pope Gregory XVI., to the great man whose memory hallows the spot. It is a bronze statue of St. Augustin, as large as life, supported by a pedestal of red and white marble, and surrounded by an iron railing, on the outside of which is an inscrip-

tion: "Concession à perpétuité par M. Billaud, 28 Août, 1839." The whole is mean and tasteless, and very ill accords with a site which awakens such exalted emotions in the breast of the beholder. What a solemn stillness prevailed all around; no human sound disturbed the pensive admirer; scarcely did I venture to breathe a word of the rapture I felt at the sight of the noble ruins, that would be classed, even in Rome, among the finest of its relics. The few archæologists who have visited this interesting spot are not agreed, I believe, as to what may have been the former shape of the present ruins of Hippo. Some maintain that they are nothing but the foundations of colossal buildings, sumptuous palaces, perhaps, in which the persecuted Christians subsequently met to worship. Others believe that they are the remains of great cisterns. They are thirty or forty feet deep, and the sides are supported by very handsome arches and pillars, which seem, however, in a very tottering condition. We did not descend to the bottom of any of them, as that would have been rather difficult, and we should have been obliged to wade in very thick mud. A few miserable straw huts, that seemed half sunk in the morass, showed that even that horrible abode was not too bad for some poor Arabs. The varied effects of the light shining through the broken arches, overgrown with acanthus and emerald green creepers, were very fine.

The panoramic view from the top of the hill, where

stands a ruined blockhouse, or *maison carrée*, is noble. Except a few shrubs, the hill is overgrown with nothing but olive trees, the leaden green of which becomes the solemn spot. Not far from the hill on which Hippo stood, and to the right of it, rises another of nearly equal elevation, on the top of which is the red-roofed *maison des condamnés*, reminding me strongly of North Germany. The mountain chain of the lesser Atlas skirts the plain, studded with white houses and marabus, through which the Seybouse winds past Hippo from Constantine. Far and wide, in front of the spectator, is the majestic sea. Even little Bona, with its casbah, its barracks, and the ships in its roadstead, forms an imposing object, and seems, as seen from here, to stand upon a peninsula. To the left, the handsome aqueducts, the French cemetery, the fields, the gardens, and the dark forests of the Edough, compose one of the finest landscapes imaginable; and yet I am assured by Captain Levrat that Hippo, as seen by day, is nothing in comparison with the enchanting aspect it presents in the lovely moonlight nights of summer. When large caravans, coming off their long journey from Tunis, encamp in the subterranean ruins, and light their tent fires, the scene must be strikingly picturesque.

We closed our ride with an attempt, which was this time successful, to see the handsome Tunisian stallions of the royal stud. We found the noble animals all at home, and had full time to admire them

as they were just having their toilettes made, each by his own *valet-de-chambre.*

XI.

Doubts ended—A visit from la Justice.

Feb. 23rd.

JACTA EST ALEA! The 'Ville de Bordeaux' steamer is in the harbour, and after our three weeks' rest and inactivity, we are again to begin our wanderings. It starts to-night for Tunis, for that still unsophisticated African pirate hold, which stands near the ruins of the renowned Carthage. I must confess that I am as delighted as a child at the prospect before me; for Algeria, fine as it may be, has lost much through the French conquest and French civilization, which for eighteen years have been gradually destroying the genuine African character.

A curious thing happened to us this morning. We were busy packing up, when a visit of *la justice* was announced to us. We could not imagine what the cause of that unusual honour could be, until all at once our room was filled with men, who began taking an exact inventory of the furniture, and told us, that as the landlord had gone off, deeply in debt, with his wife and child by the last

vessel, his creditors had made a seizure of the property he had left behind at the hotel. We had, unconsciously, been the immediate cause of our host's flight, having at his earnest entreaty paid some money in advance. So the only hotel in Bona is about to close, and if we had not the 'Ville de Bordeaux' to take us to Tunis, we should be actually turned into the streets, and I know not what would become of us. To-morrow the house will be shut up and the goods sold by auction. We are houseless, and fate absolutely wills that we shall go to Tunis.

XII.

Departure from Bona—Lasalle—Landing at Tunis—La Goletta—The Lake and the Canal—Flamingoes—Historical reminiscences—Moorish lodgings—A Character.

Tunis, March 1.

NEVER had the air breathed upon us more softly, never was the sky more richly bestrewn with millions of glittering stars, than on the evening of the 28th February, when about 8 o'clock we left the deserted Hotel de la Régence in Bona, to embark on board the 'Ville de Bordeaux' for Tunis. In this carnival season, when all is merry uproar and jubilee in my darling Rome, where I too had, of late years, my share in the annual rejoicings, I could not restrain my thoughts from taking their

swift flight to the Eternal City. My fancy showed me, as in a magic lantern, the life I used to lead there, in strong contrast with my present one. I lived over again, in memory, one of my Rome days, from my first interesting morning occupation, when my Latin master helped me to become acquainted with Horace, Virgil, Ovid, and indefatigably revealed to me the hidden treasures of those great poets,—to the evening relaxations of a drive in the Corso, or a promenade through the masked multitudes of a festino—all this stood clear before my recollection, and in an instant afterwards I found myself in the little streets of Bona. Even here, a faint echo, as it were, of the Roman carnival struck the ear. Music sounded from every café and wine-shop; harps, guitars, castanets and voices were everywhere to be heard; and although many of these gushes of merriment might issue from sorrow-laden breasts, and served, perhaps, but as pretexts to lure a few sous from the pockets of the listeners, in order to cheer, God knows what miserable existence, still these tones enlivened not the less the passing hearers, and ourselves among them. To us they appeared especially attractive, for as much as they were bestowed on the happy mortals who remained behind on the solid land, which we were about to exchange, with no excessive confidence, for the unstable and uncertain footing of the planks of the 'Ville de Bordeaux.' We were the only passengers who embarked for Tunis.

We took our places in a Maltese boat, as calmly as though we were stepping into a ferry-boat to cross some quiet German stream. The oars dipped and plashed as regularly as clock-work, in the smooth phosphorescent sea; the lights of the pretty little town of Bona grew fainter and fainter, and the tinkling of harp and guitar fell less and less audibly on our ears. We had soon rounded the little fort, on the most projecting point of the harbour of Bona. A new book in the history of our peregrinations was opened. We had seen our last of Algeria, and our inconstant gaze was already turned inquisitively towards Tunis, but first towards the old 'Ville de Bordeaux.' The evening, as I have said, was all that could be wished; but as nothing on the earth is perfect, we even missed the fair-weather-promising croak of the myriad of frogs that used to annoy us almost every evening. The traveller naturally listens for so unfailing a prophecy; but the heavens were so clear, the stars shone so bright and fiery, as if to encourage us, or as if they would burst out of their blue frames, that we could not harbour any thought of fear.

The death-like silence that lay upon the sea, extended also over the deck of the 'Ville de Bordeaux,' where no one was to be seen but some Arabs, rolled up in their burnous, passengers *aux secondes*, who had every reason to be satisfied with their quarters

à la belle étoile, since they might dream of the joys of their paradise, undisturbed by any treacherous weather or violent heaving of the ship; and a steward, who came up to us on tiptoe, and whispered that everybody was asleep. F—— soon followed the general example and retired to his cabin, whilst I remained awhile longer on deck to admire the Great Bear, the Milky Way, Orion's Belt, the red sparkling Areturus, and countless other glittering constellations. I was, however, by no means in an enthusiastic mood, but weary and sad. The great vessel, lying so utterly without sign of life, suited me not at all; for in travelling, especially in a country about which no information can be obtained through literary helps, one is thrown for communion entirely upon the human beings with whom chance brings him in contact. One must open and peruse them like a book. I should greatly have preferred the annoyance of a crowd to this utter solitude, for I was curious to learn much about Tunis, but found that I had none to whom I could address my questions on the subject, but the sea and the sky with its thousands of stars. Oh! you ever-varying, true friends, you could only repeat to me what I already felt deeply enough, that lands and regions have nothing to do with happiness,—that the senses indeed may be charmed or wearied by outward things, but that the heart everywhere carries with it its own joys,

sorrows, wounds and tortures, and that the only source of our happiness or unhappiness, remains the same at the North Pole as at the South.

With the first breath of vernal air we inhale, every vein swells with yearning, and the thirst becomes a hundred-fold augmented for loving words from home. The prospect of tracking remoter, wilder regions, without news from all that were dear to me, made me very sad. It was long since I had had letters from dear Europe, my broad home,—for home I call not the land where we first saw the light of day; no, the heart, after it has come to know itself, chooses itself a home that needs not to have anything in common with land or climate. The cool evening breezes reminded me that we were still in the month of February, and as we were not to weigh anchor until two o'clock in the morning, so as to reach Lasalle by daybreak, I retired to my dull cabin. The light plashing of oars in the calm sea, led me to surmise that other passengers were approaching the 'Ville de Bordeaux;' they were two officers, who intended to proceed with us to Lasalle, and who began a conversation with F—— in the saloon, not far from my cabin, the murmur of which put me to sleep. Between five and six o'clock I was waked by the cessation of the vessel's motion, and by some noise overhead. We lay off Lasalle, and the officers went on shore.

This little town, which is on the eastern frontier

of Algeria, not far from the territory of Tunis, stands on a steep rock that runs out into the sea, and is connected with the main land only by a sandy isthmus. Since the establishment of the coral fishery, in 1520, in the reign of Francis I., this otherwise inconsiderable town has acquired much commercial importance. In 1827, the last Dey of Algiers destroyed the buildings of the *Compagnie d'Afrique;* in 1832, the Italians again began the coral fishery, and at the close of the same year the Bey of Tunis granted the French the right of fishing for coral as far as to Cape Negro, for the yearly rent of 13,500 piastres of Tunis (one Tunis piastre is equal to three quarters of a franc). On the 22nd July, 1836, the French took possession of Lasalle, and on the 9th of November, 1844, appeared an *ordonnance,* by virtue of which every foreign vessel engaged in the coral fishery along the Algerine coast must pay the French government 800 francs a year. The majority of these vessels are Neapolitan and Tuscan. The coral trade is almost exclusively in the hands of Jews. Not fewer than seven hundred persons in Leghorn are engaged in it. The largest pieces of coral are sent to Russia; the handsomest rose-coloured pieces to China, and those of the second quality to Poland. The returns of the trade in 1844 were 900,000 francs. The whole population of Lasalle comprises two hundred and sixty permanent residents, and two thousand coral fishers,

of whom not more than three hundred remain through the winter. The little harbour can accommodate one hundred and eighty coral boats, but none of them of more than one hundred tons burthen. The steamer from Marseilles to Bona and Tunis, which, weather permitting, stops for half-an-hour every fortnight at La Calle, affords this poor little spot its sole means of intercourse with the civilised world; it is no wonder if the military stationed here complain sorely of their banishment.

Our paddles were soon in motion again, and after a short interval I fell asleep once more. At ten o'clock I went on deck and was astonished to find that a most gloomy, disagreeable day had followed so beautiful an evening. My little friends, the frogs, I found, were quite right, and it seems indeed that the predictions of these little sooth-sayers are deserving of implicit reliance. Murky and dismal looked the grey sky; a brisk shower had just ceased; deck, benches, and everything, were dripping wet, and the sea ran so high that all but the former were rocked about at every pitch of the vessel. There was no one on deck but the man at the helm and a few sailors, and nothing was to be seen of the shore. The rain began again, there was no remaining on deck, so I retired to the saloon, where I remained suffering from sea-sickness until a few rays of the parting sun enticed me out again. We had rounded

Cape Blanc, and entered the magnificent Bay of Biserta, which we passed at a distance of not more than a mile or two from the white chalky coast that rose boldly out of the dark waves. To the left we saw two uninhabited rocks, I Cani, anciently Dracontia. They are particularly dangerous to mariners in stormy weather, being sometimes entirely covered by the waves. We were involuntarily reminded of the frightful loss of the 'Avenger,' for this was the spot where that fine ship was wrecked not long before, and a great number of human beings perished by the most fearful death.

After it had grown cool, and we had gone below, we were told, about ten P.M., that we were off Tunis. Then did we solemnise a regular resurrection feast. Oh! a dire foe is the sea-sickness, whose victims we had all been; as long as one writhes and struggles in its gripe, he is dead to all ghostly and bodily enjoyments; but once out of its clutches one feels as if every sense was grown doubly keen. As Pharoah's seven lean kine fell upon the seven fat ones, so did we fall upon the untouched dessert of the captain, who had invited us to his table, and neither the good cheese nor the dried fruit was spared by us. We congratulated each other on our safe arrival, called for tea, and went after it and walked on deck until midnight. The glittering stars seemed to me still more beautiful than I had thought them in the Bona roads, and whether the

frogs croaked or not was now a matter of indifference for me. Ay, ay, we live only in the times that wrap themselves from our view, namely in the past and the future, of which Jean Paul so prettily remarks that the former wears the widow's veil, the latter the virgin's. One sea trip the more in the past, and consequently one the less in the future, is a thought that may well lull the traveller to sleep in the harbour of Tunis. A very large lake separates Tunis from the coast and from its port, which of itself forms a rather considerable town called La Goletta. We were now allowed our choice, either to travel in a very bad carriage over an impracticable road, and to be not only jolted soundly for three hours, but also upset several times in all probability, after which we might make our way to Tunis along the bank of the lake; or to cross the lake in a small boat with the chance of being detained five or six hours on the passage by contrary winds.

The very small neck of land enclosed between the lake of Tunis and the sea might very easily be cut through, but the lake is too shallow to float the smallest vessel. Our curiosity to explore the new region in which we found ourselves, would not let us rest long. When the first beams of the sun faintly tinged the summit of the surrounding mountains, we were already on deck. Admirable! exquisite! enchantingly beautiful! a new world! we cried out in extacy as we ran up and down the deck, scarcely

knowing which way to turn our eyes. The view around us was still and grave, but grand and imposing. Whether it was the solemn neighbourhood of the silent ruins of the old long-forgotten Carthage which filled us with reverence, or whether it was the sight of those mountains in which her brave queen had many a love adventure with the bold Æneas, I cannot tell; I only know that rapture seized me, and I cried out: "Glory be to travelling that shows us, in the great unvarying book of nature, the very places whereon have been enacted the heroic scenes which hovered, like the image of a dream, before our mental vision from our earliest years!" What lay next us was Cape Carthage, on which are found the few remaining ruins of that rival of Rome. We were scarcely a mile from the shore, yet could not clearly descry anything of the ruins. The genuine Moorish town of Sidi Bosaid, with its dazzling white windowless houses, stands on the same Cape; not far from it is to be seen a small chapel dedicated to Saint Louis, and beyond, is La Goletta, the harbour of Tunis. Thence a wider plain, studded with marabous and Moorish villas, extends to Tunis. Between the villas lie olive groves, mingled with groups of palms and cypresses. Seen from this point, Tunis has an uninteresting aspect, and seems to justify our Captain's remark to me "Madame, vous allez voir le plus vilain pays du monde." But two isolated hills, rising proudly above the town to the

left, and crowned with their marabouts and other buildings, look very well.

We next descried in the distance, veiled in softest air, a high mountain, called Zou-wan, the forms of which seemed to be singularly bold. At its feet lay smaller chains of hills, but it must, in my opinion, be of considerable height, and very distant from Tunis. Further, in the direction of Cape Bon, or as the Arabs called it, Ras Addar,—Ras, means Cape—which forms this majestic bay, and which is to be seen only in clear weather,—rise two other large mountains. At the foot of one of them, the Hammamlif, and in a favourite palace of the Beys, there are hot springs, as might be surmised from the word hammam itself, which signifies baths. We could just discern the white palace of Hammamlif, which lies not far from the shore. To the right of this palace is another great mountain, the forms of which are highly-interesting and peculiar; it is called Djebel Beyass, *i. e.* Lead Mountain, because it contains a great many rich veins of that metal. In the opening of this gigantic bay, between Cape Bon and Cape Carthage, lie the two islands, Zembra and Zembretta, which unfortunately we could but very faintly perceive. So much of this grand panorama was my greedy gaze able to take in within the space of a few minutes.

> Est in secessu longo locui; insula portum
> Efficit objectu laterum, quibus omnis ab alto

Frangitur inque sinus scindit sese unda reductos.
Hinc atque hinc vastæ rupes geminique minantur
In cœlum scopuli: quorum sub vertice late
Aequora tuta silent.

ÆN. I, 163.

When I mentioned that we had our choice to go by land or water, I forgot that all our baggage was already in a sail-boat, and several Maltese were urging us, in horrid *lingua Franca,* to get on board as fast as we could, so that we might make the most of the morning breeze. The Maltese are much too lazy to row; if the wind does not blow, they lie still. We stepped into the boat, where one of the Bey's soldiers, who was to accompany us to the custom-house in La Goletta, was already waiting for us. This sample of the Tunisian military enabled us to conjecture what we must expect from the government. Never had I seen so abject a creature and so miserable a clothing, which claimed to be called a uniform and to belong to a state. A pair of red European trowsers, a grey surtout, to which a hood was attached, as to a burnouse, and a red fez formed the uniform. Something tolerable might have been made, even out of these three pieces, had they only fitted in some sort; but they were old, dirty and torn, and not one of them sat well. The brisk morning wind was in our favour, until we reached La Goletta; and after a quarter of an hour's rapid sailing, we found ourselves in that wretched little town. Here we

had to pass the custom-house and the canal, through which we reached the lake, Hach-el-Wad. F—— landed, gave his word that we had no contraband goods, and after a very short delay, our four boatmen were free to advance with their craft through the very narrow canal, almost blocked up with little boats.

We made such slow way that we had time enough to observe the bustling life on the banks. Right and left of us, soldiers were exercising after the Arab manner, or changing sentries. A detachment of cannoniers were clothed all but their feet, entirely in the European style. They managed matters very differently before the conquest of Algeria by the French. On the feet they wear a pewter ornament, on which is engraved a group of flags. The sun shining upon it produced a striking contrast with the rest of the beggarly uniform of the poor soldiers. Most of them were barefoot, others had old slippers, that might once have been yellow or red, and through which their galled feet were seen. My enthusiastic gladness at having arrived at Tunis was greatly abated by these sights, and by our creeping canal voyage. Nothing whatever did I see that was pleasant, but much that was ugly. La Goletta is a miserable little place, consisting of half-finished, half-tumbled down houses. The screeches of the Moors that sounded as if yataghan strokes would immediately follow them, the noise of repairing Tunisian, Greek, and Italian war and trading ships, the barking of dogs,

the shouts of the sailors in the ships, of all nations, and the military marching along both sides of the canal, in the greatest disorder, to the music of the most ear-piercing fifes; all this made up a most inconceivably inharmonious mixture of sounds. These things may have some charm for a traveller newly-arrived from Europe; but to me, who had seen the fairer side of the East, they were only disagreeable.

When we entered the lake from the canal we had to tack, for to our dismay we found we had not even half wind. As I have mentioned, the Maltese will not row. If the wind is favourable, well and good; if not, they tack and tack, often without making the least progress. Our boat lay now on the one side, now on the other. The lake was so shallow that we expected every moment to ground, and were constantly feeling and hearing the grating of the keel against the bottom. The boatmen believed, no doubt, that this was particularly agreeable to us, for at every touch of the keel they cried out good humouredly: "Tutto antico! Tutto di Carthago!" Agreeable it would certainly not have been for us had the boat been upset, for besides being up to shoulders in water, we should have seen our whole baggage swimming away from us, and have had to remain in that uncomfortable plight the whole day, watching, perhaps in vain, for a passing boat. We should not have been drowned however, and that was some comfort, nay, the only one to be hoped for in the Bey's dominions. We saw whole

swarms of water fowl, of countless species, flying about, swimming, and diving, in all directions. Those which most attracted our attention, were the wonderfully beautiful flamingos (*phœnicopterus ruber*). In ancient times the young of these birds were considered great dainties. The greatest peculiarity of the flamingo is in its legs, which are four feet long, though not thicker than my little finger. The body is as large as that of a stork, and the plumage is snow white, except the extreme feathers of the wings, some of which are of the finest cherry red, others black. The Queen of England having frequently expressed a wish to see one of these singular birds alive, some officers succeeded, after immense trouble, in carrying away two of them from Tunis; but they broke their long legs on their journey, it being against their nature to support themselves upon them; for they either sweep sylph-like a few feet above the water, or sit upon their nests, which they build in the loneliest spots on the bank of the lake, and which are not concave like those of other birds, but consist of a conical heap of sand, over which they let their long legs hang down. These birds are so shy, and keep so much aloof from men, that even the Arabs, who know every possible artifice for surprising them, find it very hard to take one dead or alive. So great was their number, that they gave a glistening whiteness to parts of the bank. They are slow to rise from the

water; when they did so, we could see the delicate cherry red of their wings quite plainly.

About an hour before we reached Tunis, we passed a small flat island called Shikley, on which stands a large fortress said to have been built under Charles V. It has now a very desolate appearance, and has been converted into a kind of lazaretto, in which only sick soldiers and a few functionaries half dead of ennui dawdle about. The island commends itself strongly to the traveller's attention, because Cervantes, the greatest of all Spanish writers, fought there, in 1573, against the Turks.

The low white houses of the broad flat lying city of Tunis, gradually grew plainer to the view, and after four whole hours of tacking, shifting sails, and undergoing momentarily fears of being upset into the lake, we were at last at no great distance from the end of our voyage. Already we inhaled the odorous gale, not exactly like that which is wafted out to sea from the blossoming orange groves of Sorrento. It was loaded with the infernal exhalations of the sewers emptying themselves into the lake, and overpowered us to such a degree, that we immediately owned that the gentlemen in Bona had spoken but too truly. "If these be the spicy gales of Arabia," I exclaimed, snatching up my eau-de-Cologne, "the first advice I should give every traveller doomed to encounter them, would be to invent some apparatus by means of which he might

have a sweet smelling-bottle hanging always under his nose." Besides the foul scent, the air was filled also with a roaring noise, more like that of a menagerie than of human voices. It proceeded from a throng of wrangling Moors and Jews, who were waiting to pounce like birds of prey on our baggage, and carry it to the custom-house. Unable to restrain their impatience, several of them plunged into the thick inky water, and swam out to the boat, and if they were not Moors, they were at least as black when they came on board. Others of them clambered like apes up posts set close before the landing place, between which the efflux of the sewers flowed continually to and fro. Each separate article of ours was carried in triumph to the customs by several porters, besides whom we were accompanied by a crowd of officious volunteers, who were continually warning us in *lingua franca* to take care of our pockets, a piece of advice that did not give us a favourable opinion of their own honesty.

We were delayed but a very short time at the custom-house, and then proceeded to the Hotel Alexis, the only one for foreigners in Tunis. It is in the Maltese quarter, not far from the gate called by Europeans "de la Marine," and is situated in a very narrow street, which, like all streets in Eastern cities, has neither name nor number. The space between the landing place and the gate just mentioned, belongs to one of the large suburbs of Tunis, in which the old

Moorish habits and customs may still be seen just as they were several centuries ago. Camels standing or kneeling down to be laden, groups of Bedouins, blue black, dark brown, olive and copper coloured Moors, buyers and sellers of all sorts of edible commodities, files of muffled women attended by their black slaves, mingle together in the uneven unpaved streets, and pay not the least heed to the solitary European. The little that I saw of the camel-crowded streets of Tunis when I made my entrance, was not very engaging, but I was very well satisfied with my reception at the Hotel Alexis. The landlady, who had come to the country some years before, as housemaid in the French Consul's family, had married one of his men servants, and now keeps an inn much superior to any in the chief towns of Algeria, and a paragon of regularity and cleanliness, at least with reference to the Oriental standard. It is a genuine Moorish house, but unfortunately so small and so crowded, that we were forced to content ourselves with one room. But our one room was something different from what that term would imply in Europe, for it contained three beds, not one of which was visible. Like every Moorish chamber of any pretensions, it has attached to it two small closets without windows, and these serve as dormitories for the gentlemen, whilst I have a part of the large room shut off for my bed by a ricketty screen. The space between the two closets is surrounded by two divans, which are separated by a

grating from a fire-place, so that although literally we have only one room, we can receive visitors in a very respectable manner, for Tunis. The greatest defect of this abode is unquestionably its darkness, and the impossibility of lighting it in any way. The small windows and the glass door between them open on a small gallery that runs round the quadrangular court-yard. A few months later the house may be very pleasant to live in, but in the present cold weather the Moorish style of building strikes me as highly unpractical, its sole purpose being to shut out the sunshine.

Mohammed, the waiter in attendance upon us, is a very singular person. In face and figure he is a living counterpart of the Egyptian portraitures of which innumerable examples exist in fresco painting and sculpture. He is a Moor of small stature, and his Masaniello-like costume consists only of a fez, a white linen jacket, and breeches tied below the knee, leaving his dark brown legs bare, a red scarf round his waist, and a pair of very old slippers, in which he steps noiselessly over the black and white stone floor with measured tread, and with an air of great zeal in the discharge of his duties. He is a universal favourite with foreigners, but none of them have ever succeeded, by an effort of wit, in making his grave features relax into a smile.

What I had heard in Bona of the hospitality and obliging disposition of the French Consul in this place

seems to be well grounded; for though we had not a single letter of introduction to him, and he knew of our arrival only through a few lines I sent him from Bona respecting our correspondence (since he is so kind as to take upon himself the office of postmaster for the Europeans) we had not been two hours in Tunis before we received through his *homme d'affaires* his own and his daughter's cards, with an invitation to a *bal masqué*, to be held on the following Tuesday, which happened to be *Mardi gras*. We poor travellers are but ill-provided for such an occasion; but we have accepted the invitation, partly from curiosity, and partly to avoid the appearance of not properly appreciating such polite attention.

XIII.

Tunis — Life in the streets — The female sex—Character of the Tunisians—Amphitheatre of El Jemme.

March 2nd.

FOURTEEN letters, no less, from home! What a joyful harvest! After refreshing myself with their welcome contents, I must tell you about our first promenade to-day in Tunis, if so I may call a continual rubbing against, and being jostled by, dirty Bedouins, Jews, Moors, and thickly-muffled women. I have so often spoken of our walks in Moorish towns, that I am afraid what I have to say of Tunis will only be a tedi-

ous repetition. We went first to the bazaars, since those of Tunis enjoy a high reputation in the East, though for my part nothing of the kind can satisfy me after those of Constantinople. To see the bazaars of this city in perfection, one must go as early as possible, since the indolent Arab thinks no business possible after mid-day, at which time he closes his shop, and spends the rest of the day in puffing clouds of smoke from his long pipe, sipping thick coffee, and indulging his reveries.

Before nine o'clock this morning we were on our way with a Jew from the hotel for our guide; and after passing through some dirty streets, we found ourselves in the midst of the throng, bustle, and noise of countless auctions. The concourse and the din could not have been greater in a popular festivity of London or Paris than in these daily recurring auctions. The vendor, whatever be the kind of goods he has for sale, runs up and down with them through the crowd, shouting out in the wildest manner. Every thing is for sale in these Jewish bazaars, from the long musket to the richly-set diamond, from the gorgeous gold-embroidered costume to the greasy burnouse, that has already perhaps had a dozen masters. There is no lack of edibles: Moorish women, with unveiled faces, and often too scantily clothed in other respects, stalk through the throng, carrying on their outstretched arms each a pyramid of flat loaves, which you expect every moment to see tumble down. Boys, carrying

water in bags of skin, tinkle their three tin cups together, to indicate to the thirsty that refreshment is to be had. Oranges, small white cheeses, of the kind called tommo in Switzerland, little omelets fried in oil, cups of coffee ready poured out, fruits of all sorts, and a variety of dainties unknown to me, form the stock-in-trade of other ambulatory merchants. The tumult is so great that one would suppose the vendors were prohibited from plying their trade after a certain hour, and that they were in the utmost haste to get rid of their goods before the time expired; and certainly it is a strange thing to see this phlegmatic people in such a state of intense hurry.

The condition of the female sex is here as unsatisfactory as I have hitherto found it in all oriental towns. I hear that Moorish ladies of the higher classes never leave the house on any pretext, except to take a bath. In the bazaars we saw a great number of women, but all of the lower classes. Those of the lowest grade are dressed in dirty white shapeless garments, and their faces are covered with a double black veil, with only a small opening for the eyes, so that the features are entirely concealed. There is something demoniacal in the appearance of their coal-black eyes glaring through their white veils. A more richly dressed class of women, but of questionable reputation, have a still more disagreeable aspect if possible. They wear bright coloured garments, sometimes of silk; and across their heads is laid a large gaudy striped scarf, which they

hold on either side, with their arms stretched out horizontally, to hinder it from fluttering about their faces. Their features are thus hidden from sight, whilst they themselves can see all before them, and exhibit the beauties of their scarf in the best light. They look like enormous bats, and are great nuisances in the crowded bazaars, where they take up as much room as three or four ordinary persons.

Here, as in Constantinople, every article has its own bazaar, with the exception of the Jewish auctions, where vendors of all kinds of wares run about promiscuously. Boots and shoes, saddlery, silk mercery, weapons, essences, spices, garments embroidered with gold and silver; skull-caps, (fez,) here called sheskia, in the manufacture of which 20,000 men are employed, since the Bey yearly sends a great number of them as a present to the Sultan of Constantinople for his troops; pipes, ropes, chains, every article in short has its own distinct building. The architecture of these bazaars is perhaps more original than that of the Constantinopolitan. They are all arched in with solid masonry, with here and there some scanty openings, admitting a feeble light, so that on first entering them from the street one can see nothing.

One sometimes finds in paltry little shops very costly goods, which one would hardly look for in such places. Yesterday evening I saw a costume surpassing anything I had yet beheld in richness, elegance, and finished workmanship. It was of black velvet, most

substantially embroidered with the finest gold. The price of such a dress is no trifle, for it ranges from 1500 to 2000 francs. There are many things one misses here that impart variety and interest to a walk through the streets of Constantinople; but on the other hand Tunis has its compensating advantages. It is not infested with such multitudes of wretched dogs, nor in approaching its bazaars is it necessary to go up and down hill, and to make two trips, often dangerous ones, every time across the Golden Horn. Constantinople is nevertheless the crown of all the oriental towns I have yet seen, but for filth and foul smells Tunis indisputably bears off the palm. The sights I most miss here are the handsome Armenians, the black haired Persians, the singular looking dervishes, and many other characteristic objects. The only persons to be seen are Maltese, Moors, Negroes, and Jews: the latter are recognized by their black turbans, since they are not allowed to wear the white or green turban or coloured shoes. They inhabit a distinct quarter of the town, called the Hara. Polygamy is sanctioned among the Tunisian Jews, though they seldom have more than one wife.

We made our way as well as we could through the brawling throng from one bazaar to another, stunned by the noise, and the overpowering aromatic odours, and rewarded for our pains with severe headaches. Longing for fresh air, and space enough to walk ten steps without obstruction, I asked our cicerone were there no

gardens in Tunis. He said he would take us to one; then after walking a good while through the narrowest streets, he halted before two trees, growing against a wall, and surrounded by a plot of about four feet wide, perhaps; and this, he told us, was the largest garden in the town. There is no public promenade in Tunis, nor within a great distance outside it. The town is surrounded by two walls very like those of Pisa. The inner one has seven gates, the outer nine; and these are so cleverly arranged, that the outer gates do not correspond with the inner ones; hence, after passing out of one of the latter, one has still some way to travel between the two walls before reaching the open country. Tunis, including the suburbs, Bled-el-Hadrah, Bled-el-Swaiky, and Sibbah, measures four or five English miles in circumference. In Europe, a town of so many inhabitants would be far more extensive; but here the smaller space is sufficient, because a large portion of the inhabitants live day and night in the streets without a roof over their heads, and also each house contains many more inmates than is usual with us. The population is about 200,000, of whom 30,000 are Jews, 5,000 Maltese; and about the same number are Roman Catholics of other countries. The only part of the town where a wheeled carriage can travel, is the space between the walls; and there we met one of the Bey's ministers in an old European britschka, of which assuredly no soothsayer vaticinated in its young days,

that in its old age it should roll through Tunis behind three stout mules.

The physiognomy of Tunis is genuine Moorish; most of the houses have but one floor; there are no windows looking on the street; and at least every tenth house lies in ruins, giving a still more desolate appearance to the paltry streets. A great number of these ruins owe their existence to a peculiar superstition. Whenever a Moor dies whilst engaged in building a house, the unfinished edifice, and all its materials, are abandoned for ever, because it is believed that a like fate would befal any man who should meddle with them. The houses are of brick or stone, and are very frequently whitewashed. In the Maltese quarter, are the residences of all the consuls, some of whom have very handsome two or three storied-houses in the European style, which look like palaces above the little Moorish dwellings. In Tunis, as in all oriental towns, the consuls hold a far more important position, in reference to the court of the Bey, than that occupied by their brethren in civilized countries, because they supply the place of ambassadors, and not only take charge of the commercial interests of their countrymen, but also act as diplomatic agents. Nay, it often happens that the natives seek protection from the consuls, especially the English consul, against their own Government, since those functionaries, not recognising the Bey as an independent sovereign, but as

a vassal of the Porte, are thereby enabled to constrain him to deal justly by his subjects. France, however, has shown that she regards the Bey as an independent monarch; for, during his visit to Paris some years ago, the Government paid him all those honours which are usually bestowed only on sovereigns who reign by their own right. When the Bey, prompted to that step, it is probable by France, inquired of the English Court what reception he should meet with in Great Britain, he was answered that he should be made very welcome in London, but only as a vassal of the Sultan of Constantinople, whereupon he abandoned his design of visiting the island.

After our morning toilette, which was adapted to the narrow, dirty bazaars, had been exchanged for more suitable habiliments, we called upon M. Logau, the French Consul, but found neither himself nor his daughter at home. On our way thither, we had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the adroitness of the Moorish pickpockets; for T—— had his pocket-handkerchief stolen before he could look round him. The pickpockets of Tunis are, indeed, highly accomplished in their profession; and I believe that a Moorish thief feels a particular zest in robbing an European. The hatred felt for us by the natives is very strong; and among the older inhabitants, it is so intense that nothing in the world could induce them to exchange a single word with an unbeliever. I was assured that no European has ever yet been allowed to set foot

within one of the mosques of this city. When I expressed to my landlady, my wish to visit a Moorish family, she was quite exasperated, and said:

"Don't think of such a thing, Madame; it is impossible; don't fancy yourself in Algeria; we are here in a land of downright barbarism."

Kairwan, next to Tunis the most populous commercial town of the regency, is the holiest in all North Africa, because the great prophet's barber lies buried there. Neither Christians nor Jews are allowed admission into the town. Some Jewish merchants who entered it disguised as Arabs, were discovered; they were horribly maltreated and slaughtered by the populace, and their dead bodies were cut to pieces and thrown over the town walls. All criminals escaped from the hand of the law, who seek refuge within the town are safe from all aggression; for every human authority expires on the threshold of the holy gate. Kairwan lies in a dry sandy plain, eight leagues west of Susa. Its mosque, supported by five hundred granite columns, is the handsomest in all Barbary, and the holiest in the estimation of the Arabs. The murder of a Christian, it is said, tends rather to sanctify a Mussulman than to brand him with guilt, especially when the deed is done for the Prophet's sake.

The impression made on me by the people of this country is that of a very fierce, intractable race; their joy at not sharing the fate of their vanquished neighbours seems written in their faces; they triumph in

the feeling that they are still the children of a Mussulman power. There is a much greater air of cheerfulness and conscious freedom among the Tunisians than among the Algerines, in whose countenances is plainly legible their repugnance to the newly imposed yoke of the enemies of their religion. The Tunisians are nevertheless, on the whole, the most civilized people of Barbary, and show little of the arrogance and insolence with which the Algerines are so generally charged. Of late years the people of Tunis have applied themselves less to piracy than to trade and manufacture, and at all times they have been more disposed than their neighbours to friendly intercourse with European states.

A few minutes after we had returned from our first promenade in Tunis, I had a visit from Mr. Lindon, an Englishman, who had been our travelling companion from Stora to Bona, and proprietor of the steamer "Scotia," which we saw wrecked at Stora. He introduced to me a half countrywoman, the young Irish wife of Mr. Roland, a Scotchman, who gives himself out for a descendant of Mary Stuart. They had been residing in the room opposite us in this hotel for five months. Mr. Roland, who is a keen sportsman, had been away for some days. His tastes may derive full gratification from the variety and abundance of game which the country affords; but whilst he is absent for ten days or a fortnight at a time, his wife has no other pastime than looking into the hotel yard,

and seeing public execution done upon sundry unfortunate fowls and ducks. She must either be a woman of extraordinary natural resources, or she must often be moped to the verge of suicide. The latter, I fear, is the case; for her first visit was prolonged to our astonishment through all the rest of the day.

Respecting the security of travellers in this country, just as on all other matters, we have received such conflicting information that we are in the utmost perplexity. Captain Levrat, whose care for our convenience extended to this point among many others, gave us a letter to a French colonel in the Bey's service, who has been fifteen years in the country, and must, therefore, be competent to advise us. We made his acquaintance yesterday; and as I am of a restless nature when travelling, particularly in a land where there is much to be seen, the first thing I asked Colonel Guiraud was whether we could venture upon an excursion to El Jemme. But before I proceed I must say what was the motive that attracted me towards that rather unknown spot.

Unfortunately, we possess but too scanty information about the amphitheatre of El Jemme, highly interesting though it be for its magnitude and its imposing style of architecture. It is to be reached from Tunis by a toilsome journey of three days on horseback, partly through execrable roads, partly through sandy wastes. It lies on the eastern borders of the regency, some leagues distant from the sea, and is conjectured

to have been built in the time of Antoninus. In point of magnitude and grandeur it is the third amphitheatre in the world, yet it stands quite isolated in a sandy waste; scarcely visited even by a few roving Bedouins. Its longer diameter measures 429 feet, its shorter 368 feet, and it is said to have been capable of holding 60,000 spectators. The town to which it belongs may hence be conjectured to have been very considerable, but not a trace of it is now visible, and it can hardly be determined where it stood. This majestic work of human hands consisted of 64 arches, and four rows of columns, one above another. The uppermost range is now for the most part destroyed. Mohamed Bey used the amphitheatre as a fortress, and blew up the breadth of four arches. Scarcely any thing can match the magnificence of this edifice, as seen from the exterior. Is it possible to conceive any thing more striking than the melancholy majesty of the noble ruin surrounded by an utter desert? What is human life with all its grandeurs, compared with such a witness of antiquity? This monument was once enlivened, perhaps, by the gorgeous festivities of a second Rome; but for centuries the death-like stillness in which it stands has been broken only by the prowling beast of prey, or the scream of the night bird; and so, in all likelihood, it will remain until the whole earth shall be shaken by the pealing of the last trumpet. No foot of civilized man, scarcely any human foot, treads that mysterious

ground; no feeling heart sighs in sympathy over the fallen greatness that once adorned it. Rome, too, has its ruins, finer, perhaps, than those of the amphitheatre of El Jemme, but they are ruins that live along with us, so to speak, that are daily visited, I might almost say, desecrated, by fair faced, long locked, physico-sentimental English ladies, and even by English fox hunters; but here, on the shores of Barbary, in an unknown wilderness, three days' journey from Tunis, what an infinite field for mournful poetic reverie must the scene present to the heart of the pilgrim from a far distant land! Oh! I must go to El Jemme, I must seek in solitude to become reconciled to our formal conventional life of these days; I feel myself attracted thither by I know not what indescribable power!

When conversing with Colonel G. as to the possibility of reaching El Jemme, he gave me every encouragement towards the execution of my cherished project.

"Under the protection of an escort," he said, "which your consul can easily obtain for you from the Bey, you may undertake this interesting journey in full security, if you are not deterred by six days of great toil and privations of all kind."

Widely different were the views of Mr. Lindon, with whom we conversed on the same subject a few hours afterwards. He assured us that travelling in this country is exceedingly dangerous, not to say impracticable.

"We newly-arrived Europeans could have no notion," he said, "how much the natives thirsted for our blood, and what a hazardous thing it was to make even the least excursion into the interior." His representations were so alarming, that I saw my fascinating El Jemme fade more and more into the far distance, till it melted into thin air, and I was forced to consider a journey thither as synonymous with certain death.

XIV.

New acquaintance—News from Europe—Ancient and modern Tunis—Lunatics and saints.

March 4th.

YESTERDAY I had the pleasure of a visit from Miss H., my travelling companion from Algiers to Stora. She is one of the few unmarried ladies in whose company one feels the pleasure of being comprehended by an enlightened woman. She is no longer young; but she possesses an inexhaustible fund of intelligence and cheerfulness; her enthusiasm for Italy, and the nomadic life which she, like me, has led from her earliest youth in unhoused variety, enable us to discover many points of mutual accordance. Mademoiselle H. came to us with her cousin, M. Tullin, who has for many years filled the post of Swedish Consul in Tunis, where

he was born, and where he has a handsome residence as well as in Arriana, a place near Tunis, where most of the consuls pass the summer. We have special letters of introduction to M. Tu[illegible]n's family; but, unfortunately, they have been plunged into the deepest sorrow by two deaths, and, as strangers, it is impossible for us, under these circumstances, to make their closer acquaintance.

My beautiful dream of El Jemme seems rapidly transforming itself into a very European way of life in Tunis. The weather, too, has again changed for the worse, the spring that greeted us in Bona having relapsed into winter. It is singular that the same winds produced different effects on the coasts of Barbary, in Italy, and in Spain; for whilst in the two latter a clear sky is the invariable accompaniment of the keen *tramontana,* in this country the north wind always brings with it clouds and much rain. This time Boreas has brought us not only cold and wet, but also Mr. Roland, who, though a Scotch highlander, could not make himself quite at home in the Bedouin tent in such weather. We made his acquaintance yesterday at dinner, for which meal our host has engaged to provide a separate table for us five. Mr. Lindon was Mr. Roland's guest, and as all sportsmen abound with incredible stories of the perils and adventures of the field, particularly here in Africa, where they have to do, not with hares and partridges, but with lions

and hyenas, we had plenty of such marvels related to us on this occasion, especially after the champagne had loosened the gentlemen's tongues.

This evening our Ville de Bordeaux goes back to Marseilles, and as the exiles in Tunis have only one opportunity in the fortnight to write to Europe, you may imagine what an important post-day the present has been for us. The letters had to be delivered at the French Consul's by three o'clock, and as the weather seemed tolerably fair, and there remained a long time to be disposed of before our late dinner, we accepted the offer of Mr. and Mrs. Roland, to show us some parts of the town we had not yet seen.

I must make a clean breast of it, and confess how much I am tormented by the slight probability I see of soon escaping from this place. Tunis is, certainly, an interesting town, but by no means an agreeable abode. I feel here as in a mouse-trap, in a perpetual imprisonment, the end of which is hidden from me by the grim shadows of futurity. I can truly say that my entire uncertainty as to the whether, how, and when of our departure, is a canker to my peace; the ground burns, I know not why, under the soles of my feet, and T——, who was very unwilling to extend his travels to this place, has all but ceased to be numbered with the living; and in the full anticipation that, now we are here, no steamer will ever again ply between Tunis and Malta, he asks demurely, and with a

resignation indicative of the deepest despair, where we Christians are to be buried after death in this heathen land.

From the moment we left pleasant Bona, I felt a presentiment that we were going to a disagreeable captivity. Had we been courageous enough to encounter the storm of the 13th and 14th, we should now have been in Malta; for eight days ago an English steamer arrived here from that island with Government despatches, and went back with the Consul's answer, after stopping a short while. We are now awaiting a similar god-send; but our patience may be severely put to the proof, for the Malta steamers are quite comet-like in their times of coming and going. The English Consul himself knows nothing until a messenger from La Goletta steps into his office, and announces their arrival. Sometimes two steamers are despatched in the course of one week from Malta to Tunis, and sometimes none are sent for several months, just as the Government has despatches to forward or not. The most disagreeable part of our present predicament is, that we cannot venture on any lengthened excursion without being afraid of hearing, on our return, that a steamer has not only arrived, but also departed again. Had I seen the few ruins of Carthage, I should be much more at ease, I believe; but the bare thought of being obliged to leave the country without having visited that classic spot is a terrible annoyance to me.

Hitherto, this rather long excursion has been impossible on account of the bad roads and the rain. Every trifle which I see here, I regard as so much saved.

Meanwhile, we receive, for our recreation, the most startling political intelligence, whether brought by sailing-vessels newly arrived from Europe, or produced by the inventive powers of the good people of Tunis. The Queen of Spain is said to be on her death-bed. Poor girl! her life has been one continued storm from her cradle. What a fearful war may not her death kindle throughout Europe. Messieurs les Français are as much weather-cocks as ever; they are as capricious as children. After fifteen years of exertion, they have succeeded in taking prisoner an enemy, who all that time kept them in constant anxiety and alarm—I mean Ab-del-Kader; and now it is said that, like children tired of a new toy, they are going to set him free again! It is to be hoped that this is a story invented by some of the idle heads here, but at any rate, true it is that the whole world is in a ferment. To-day, there was a great festival of liberty celebrated in the Catholic church of Tunis; and the green, white, and red banner of Italian national independence waved proudly over the sacred rites. The Consuls, and their ladies, were present in full dress; but those of Naples and France were absent. *Feux-de-joie* were fired, lively dance-tunes were played in church during the Mass; all the Consuls, who were well regarded, had serenades given them, and the usually dreary streets of

Tunis had new life infused into them, and swarmed with gaily dressed people, among whom the exulting Italians, with their tri-colour cockades, were certainly not the gloomiest. O that I were back again in that lovely land, which at last resolves to shake off a yoke it has borne so long, and whose cheers resound across the sea to this remote coast of Barbary! It is but too true that we never know the worth of a thing until we have lost it; and so, perhaps, the time will come when I shall look back, with longing regret, to Africa. Be that as it may, my longing for Italy is unspeakably great.

Before we begin our wanderings through Tunis, I must set down some historical facts respecting the city.

> Tunisi, ricca ed ornata sede,
> Al par di quante n' ha Libia più conte.

The historical recollections which Tunis and its environs suggest to the traveller are of great interest. Every mountain, every bay, every promontory is associated with some heroic deed of various mighty nations, whose very names, in some instances, have almost passed into oblivion. Phœnicians, Africans, Greeks, Romans, Numidians, Goths, Vandals, Arabs, Spaniards, and Turks, have here held sway successively. The names of Dido, Hannibal, Hasdrubal, Hanno, Mago, Agathocles, Regulus, Syphax, Jugurtha, Scipio, Belisarius, St. Louis, and Charles V. rise before us like a

constellation of glories lighting the path of imagination into a bygone world. Tunis is supposed to have been of still earlier date than Carthage, having been founded B.C. 1250, not by Phœnicians, but by native Africans. It was probably the residence of that Prince Iarbas, from whom Dido purchased the land on which she built Carthage, and who afterwards sought her hand. Tunis plays only a subordinate part in history, as the neighbour of the great Carthage, though it was very often implicated in the latter's fortunes. Tunis was taken in the year 395 B.C. by neighbouring races, which had taken the field against their former allies, the Carthaginians; and again in the year 310 B.C., it was taken by Agathocles. In the first Punic war, it fell into the hands of Regulus, whose army, as tradition relates, suffered much from a gigantic serpent in the neighbourhood of Tunis, until they had recourse to machines of war to destroy the monster. Regulus did not long retain his sway over Tunis, for it was soon afterwards wrested from him by the Spartan General, Xanthippus. Cornelius Scipio made himself master of the place in the second Punic war, and Æmilianus in the third. During the Roman civil wars, Tunis belonged to various rulers; it fell into the hands of the Goths A.D. 439; was taken by Belisarius in 533; by the Saracens in 698; Barbarossa made himself master of it in 1531, but lost it to Charles V., who at that time undertook his famous and successful

campaign against the Turks. Since that period, the Algerine banner has four times waved over the towers of Tunis. Thus the city shared the same fate as other Barbary States, and was frequently brought under the dominion of rulers who declared themselves independent, and supreme. At one time, the Sheiks of Morocco, at another, those of Fez were masters of Tunis. Notwithstanding all these vicissitudes, however, Tunis is, to this day, the "well-guarded city," as the Arabs say, and still bears among them the cognomen of "the abode of blessedness."

Except some pillars, capitals, and a few inscriptions, Tunis contains no relics of antiquity. As the Mussulmans firmly believe, that in the next world a statue will demand a soul of him who has made it in this, they have destroyed all the antique statues they found, both in Greece and Africa.

Mohammed well knew that the fine arts sharpen the intellect, and therefore he put out of their way everything likely to make them perceive the strangeness of his doctrine. He knew that his religion could not endure the least rational investigation. The Tunisian Moors learn a little reading and writing, just enough to understand the Koran and to sign their names. The best educated part of the population are the clergy and the notaries. The Moor is indolent by nature; he hates every movement and every labour, though industry is recommended by the Prophet, and his

whole existence is a continuous reverie. But I have wandered from my subject, and must now say something about the present dynasty of Tunis.

It began in the person of Hassan-ben-Ali. He died in 1753, and was succeeded by his eldest son, who reigned only thirty months. The latter left two sons; nevertheless the throne was ascended by his younger brother, Ali Bey. Ali died in 1782. The eldest of his four sons (Hamuda, Othman, Mohammed, and Mamoon) succeeded him. Hamuda was a man of great courage and capacity, and his reign may well be called the Augustan age of Tunis. He was respected and feared abroad, and at home he was beloved by all, for great was the number of reforms and improvements he introduced.

After his death, in 1815, in his sixty-third year, he was succeeded by his brother Othman, a man most unlike himself; a depraved voluptuary, and a slave to the lowest vices. The scenes of horror that took place during his life in the Bardo were like those that polluted Capri in the time of Tiberius. After a reign of three months this tyrant was put to death along with his son; and Mahmoud, the son of his brother Mohammed, became Bey; but this prince was so weak in intellect, and so incapable of conducting the affairs of state, that his reign was but nominal. The actual sovereign was his son Hussein, without whose signature no act was valid, even though sanctioned by the Bey himself. Ismael, the Bey's brother, was nominated

Bey of the camp; but so great was his dread of being poisoned or strangled, that he soon gave up the ghost from pure distress of mind.

Mahmoud died at a very advanced age in 1825. His eldest son Hussein succeeded to the throne, and his second son Mustafa was made Bey of the camp. The affairs of the nation were now brought into a critical position through the caprice of a woman, the licentious habits of a reigning Bey, and the very bad administration of the Bassumamluke. The debts which the Bey contracted with European merchants increased every day, and the almost exhausted treasury afforded him no prospect of extinguishing them. Hussein abandoned himself to despair, and withdrew to Abdelia, to shun in that sequestered spot the obtrusive evidences of his embarrassed condition. Fatimah-el-Misteri, his virtuous, upright, and beneficent wife, assumed the reins of government, but died in childbirth in 1831. Hussein survived her only a few years, and was succeeded on the throne by his brother Mustapha, who reigned only two years, and her son Achmet, the present reigning Bey, came to the throne on the 10th of October, 1837. Of this prince I shall speak more fully hereafter. At present I must revert to our promenades through Tunis with Mr. and Mrs. Roland.

The lateness of the hour had cleared the streets of the buyers and sellers that usually throng them, so that we could saunter about more at our ease, and admire many fine specimens of the oldest and purest

style of Moorish architecture. The horse-shoe formed gateways and the neat small pillars, some of which I am sorry to say, are most tastelessly painted red and green, are amongst the prettiest things that can be seen; and the tall minarets, like so many stately giraffes' necks lifted up to overlook the whole city, always set me in an ecstasy. The custom of calling out from these minarets, at stated hours of the day and night, to remind the faithful of their prayers, and thus indicating the course of time, (since the use of clocks and watches is unknown among Mohammedans) is of very ancient date, and may be traced back to the sixty-fifth year of the Hegira. The Bey's palace and the mosque near it are two handsome buildings, that much engaged our attention. We should no doubt have thought them worth the trouble of closer inspection, but it was impossible for us to obtain admission into them. It was here the then reigning Bey entertained our Queen Caroline, the wife of George IV., when she visited Tunis.

Mr. Roland next took us to the door of the Casbah. Two grim-looking Moors who were seated cross-legged under it smoking their pipes, cast looks upon us that seemed to say, "Woe to you, infidels, if you dare to cross this holy threshold," and made it superfluous for our guide to inform us that no Christian is ever admitted within the building. We therefore contented ourselves with a distant glance at a very curious picture in the Byzantine style, in-

serted in the door. As belonging to the Casbah it was probably an allegorical representation of strength and power, for the only details I could make out were several cannons on either side, and two lions devouring weaker animals. In the open space before the Casbah stood several camels, some laden, others freed from their burthens. These poor brutes are very cruelly treated. To-day I saw for the first time, the means used for hindering them from moving from the spot. One of the fore-legs is tied up quite high, so that the creature must stand on the remaining three, and cannot make one step backwards or forwards.

Mr. Roland took us to a somewhat elevated spot, whence there is an extensive view over Tunis and its neighbourhood. In our ascent we ran some risk of being stoned liked St. Stephen, by a mad Moorish woman. "Follow me quickly, and do not look round," said Roland, who knew the woman. We obeyed his instructions without inquiring into the reason of them; and when we stopped on the summit of the hill, he said, "Now look how that mad Moor woman, leaning there against the wall, pelts every one with stones that dares to look at her." It was not long, indeed, before his words proved true, and we saw the unfortunate creature flinging several large stones with great fury at the passers by. I do not remember to have ever seen a more horrid object than that poor maniac. She was quite naked, with the exception of

a few rags as black with dirt as her skin; her coarse matted hair and the diabolical glances of her wandering eyes made me shudder, and I could almost fancy she had been ejected from the infernal world as too hideous a being. She leaned motionless against the wall; in each hand she held a stone, and beside her lay a heap of such missiles; her long arms, with which she flung the stones, were the only parts of her body that she moved. As all idiotic persons are regarded by the Mohammedans not only with honour, but with a sort of religious veneration, this maniac is left at full liberty. Who knows but the Mussulmans would deem it a high honour to have one's brains knocked out by her hands? She spends the night and great part of the day in a subterraneous hole in the neighbourhood, and her votaries no doubt vie with each other for the honour of providing her subsistence.

We did not suffer our looks to dwell long on so melancholy a spectacle, but gladly turned them from her to enjoy the prospect over the city, that lay stretched out before us. Seen from this point, Tunis forms with its suburbs, a great sea of Moorish buildings, the uniformity of which is only broken by several mosques and taper minarets. As St. Paul's in London and St. Peter's in Rome tower majestically over all other objects, so here too one majestic mosque quite eclipses the other edifices in the town. Not a single European house disturbs the genuine

Oriental character of the view; no fine mountains form a back-ground for the dreary picture; and as far as my eye could reach, it discovered only one palm, nor did the sun vouchsafe us the benefit of his beautifying rays. Truly I have seen enough of Tunis to be aware that it is a town of much more primitive and unadulterated character, than anything we have yet seen besides in Africa; but I feel also, that to be seen aright it must be beheld under the enlivening beams of an Oriental sun, and not under a grey dull sky like that of to-day.

We passed the mad woman a second time uninjured, and sauntered to the Mejerdha gate, which leads to Biserta, and takes its name from a stream that flows near it. Here we were not a little surprised at discovering a second lake close by Tunis. In the distance we could distinguish the Bardo, a favourite country seat of the Bey's, which forms in itself a little fortified town. It now began to be chilly, and we turned our steps homewards, first through the space between the walls, and then through the deserted bazaars. The space between the walls offers the stranger many an interesting picture; old caravanserais, laden camels arriving from and departing for all parts of Africa, coffee-houses with the most picturesque groups assembled before the doors. Among the latter are some few who endeavour to produce a little music out of a very primitive sort of three stringed guitar, and however ill they succeed, there is something very

gratifying to me in the mere feeling of a desire for something musical.

The saints of this land seem decidedly unpropitious to us. In passing through a bazaar on our way home, I stopped to look at a wooden sarcophagus, two or three feet high, erected very absurdly in the middle of the thoroughfare. R—— told me it was the tomb of a Mohammedan saint, *i. e.* madman, who had died on that spot, and was buried there by the natives, from a feeling of religious veneration. While we were talking, we were interrupted by an indescribably hideous vociferation, so that I really imagined that our contemptuous expressions had aroused the holy man from his death sleep to take vengeance upon us. Though this conjecture was not literally true, we had nevertheless to do with another madman. "Go on quickly, and do not look round," said Roland, "here comes one of the worst of these lunatics; he is the greatest nuisance in the town, and woe to the European who falls in his way." Our pursuer, a great ugly Moor, without any clothing except a piece of linen by way of a shirt, soon came up with us, gesticulating with his long arms, and bellowing in our ears. We stopped sometimes in hopes he would pass on; but no, he was not to be deprived of the pleasure of annoying us, and he pursued us with his diabolical howlings and threatening gestures all the way to the Maltese quarter. This made me so unwell, that I was often near crying, and we were all not a

little rejoiced when we arrived without further accident in the hotel.

XV.

The Bey and his equipage—The cemetery of Tunis—Death place of St. Louis—Chapel erected to his memory—Site of Carthage—Sir Thomas Reade.

March 6th,

THE weather was yesterday so cold and uncomfortable that it was not until four in the afternoon, and after much persuasion on the part of Mr. Roland, that we ventured out of our vault-like chamber. We went out at the Marine gate, and took the road between the walls to the oldest and most celebrated cemetery outside the town. I was now glad I had left my damp room, for the sun broke out from between the heavy clouds, and very advantageously lighted up two little hills to the right, that form one of the chief ornaments to the generally flat and dreary landscape. The conversation turned on Tunis, and I was just expressing a wish to see the Bey, when suddenly we heard a rapid sound of approaching hoofs and a clattering of weapons that made us halt and look round. "The Bey! the Bey!" cried Mr. and Mrs. Roland, with one breath; "what a singular coincidence! Such a good fortune has not occurred to us before, though we have been four

months in Tunis." I had hardly time to apply my *lorgnette* to my eye, when the whole party dashed by us. The Bey's escort, his *guardia nobile*, consisted, as well as I could hurriedly make out, of some twenty hambas, that is to say cavalry clad in the same kind of wretched uniform as the soldier who had accompanied us from the steamer to La Goletta. Six of them rode a little in advance with their sabres drawn. Then came the carriage in which the Bey sat with three grandees. It was a handsome blue coach with red wheels, a present from the Queen of England, which has had the effect of rendering it lawful for any man in Tunis to ride with four horses to his carriage—a distinction previously reserved for the Bey only. As the Bey must have eight mules to draw this heavy European coach fast enough over the bad roads of Tunis, he still preserves a sumptuary superiority in this respect over those to whom he has (for that reason perhaps) granted the privilege of driving a coach and four. Three of the handsome mules were mounted by ill-dressed postillions; the one next the carriage had only one mule, both the others had two. About twenty or thirty hambas brought up the rear in great disorder; each of the last two leading a richly caparisoned saddle-horse, though one of the animals could hardly be called a horse, being one of our pigmy Shetland ponies. A saddle-horse seems to be a thing from which no oriental can part, for one or more always accompany the carriage of every great lord.

Several officers rode in disorder after the party, which really looked more like a gang of robbers than the *cortège* of a sovereign. The Bey and his companions in the carriage bowed to us; but they passed so rapidly by, that I had no time to distinguish the Bey's features or his dress. He was on his way to his favourite residence, Hamamlif; and for a long while afterwards we saw stragglers of his suite hurrying by on fine and richly adorned horses, with ragged Bedouins attending them as grooms. It must be confessed that the apparition of the Sultan of Constantinople when he goes on Friday, in his most beautiful *caïque*, to pray at one of the great Mosques, leaves a more imposing impression on the foreigner's mind.

The various currents of air through which we passed were such that I made a vow never again to walk one step in Tunis without my bottle of Eau de Cologne, for what the sensitive olfactory nerves have here to endure is indescribable. Near the gate leading to Hamamlif, is the handsomest fountain in the whole town; its architecture is simple and noble, and certainly of great antiquity. When looking on the caravans that halt for refreshment at the ever-flowing waters, one cannot help calling to mind Jacob, Rebecca, and other patriarchal worthies. Here, every object speaks of a different age from that in which we live, and the stream of time seems to have gone back a couple of thousand years. Immediately beyond the gate is the largest and oldest cemetery of Tunis. It

extends to the summit of one of the hills I have mentioned. But what a melancholy deserted region is thence beheld! Nothing but a dead flat covered with sepulchral monuments, some standing, others partially or wholly broken down. Cheerless in the highest degree seemed that burial ground, which seemed typical of nothing but Mussulman jealousy surviving after death; for, with all my pains, I could discover no other flower than the orange yellow marigold, which, amongst us, is the emblem of jealousy. This plant bloomed in great luxuriance, and the fact seemed to me quite in unison with the jealous behaviour of the Mussulmans towards their women. We followed a sort of path over the field of the dead, strewn with bones, stones, and old marabouts, untouched for centuries by human hands, and mouldering in decay. But no, I am wrong, for the sight of some newly white-washed dazzling monuments, brought vividly before me the Saviour's comparison of the Scribes and Pharisees to whited sepulchres, beautiful without, but within full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. We did not venture to quit the trodden path, for though we saw no one, yet certain unwelcome sounds that seemed as if issuing from the world below, gave us to understand that we were not unwatched by evil spirits. Mr. Roland also assured us that it would be extremely imprudent to step right or left among the graves, for several "saints" would not fail to rush

out and fall upon us. The Tunisian cemeteries are no more to be compared with those of Constantinople than the Bey's presence with the Sultan's. Here the monuments are, with few exceptions, mere heaps of rubbish, whilst those of Stamboul, Scutari, and other Turkish towns, rise in the most graceful forms between the grave-still foliage of the tall cypresses. Centuries have spread their hallowed calm over those resting places, as witness their miles-wide groves of lofty cypresses; but in Tunis, not a tree, not a shrub, not a leaf, adorns the last home of the Moors. In Scutari methought I could willingly exchange life for such a resting-place beneath the majestic shadows of the mourning cypress; but here in Tunis it seems to me that one would gladly cling to the most painful existence in order to escape such a cheerless banishment. I saw one palm near the gate, but it had a dejected and sorrowing look, as though its beauty was blighted by the dismal scene.

The cemetery is partly surrounded by a chain of hills, whose heights are crowned by the sainted grave of Sidi-Ali-ben-Hassan and by the burj, (tower) of Ali Rais, which is erected over some picturesque marble fragments. It is separated by a small valley from the elevated site of the monuments of Lilla Aysha Mauvobiah and Lalelah, the only two canonised princesses known in the Regency. When a corpse is to be buried in this country,

it is taken at the hour of afternoon prayer to a Mosque, whence it is accompanied to the grave by the greater part of the congregation. The procession, moves not slowly, but very fast, singing in chorus some appropriate verses from the Koran. Persons of rank are laid in their own burial-places. The shining whitewashed cupolas in the cemetery always indicate that persons of quality rest beneath them. Two, and even three months after the funeral, the female relations of the deceased go to the cemetery to renew their solemn offerings to the dead. It was too late to reach the top of the hill, and the cold was so sharp that we were obliged to content ourselves with a hasty glance at the town, and begin our long walk homewards.

We had a cutting wind in our teeth on our return, and very glad I was that I had put on my thickly wadded velvet mantilla, though it was not without its inconvenience, for velvet stuffs, it appears, are little known here, and I could scarcely go twenty paces without some child, or even grown person, coming up to admire the curiosity. After touching it and almost wiping their dirty hands upon it, they would start back and begin a long discourse among themselves about the marvel. Handsome groups of Moorish buildings, here and there tall minarets and palm-trees, and the observation of a people so unlike our own, shortened the long way back, and when we reached the hotel, it was already dark. We

passed the evening with Mr. L——, whose house is, perhaps, the handsomest in Tunis and built in the European style by a Genoese merchant, named Gueco. The grand entrance to it, however, is not yet finished, and to come to our amiable new friend's, we had to squeeze ourselves like snakes a pretty long way between two walls. In the court-yard we were reminded of my favourite Rome, by the merry roar of several Maltese masquers. But I must not encourage such reminiscences, for, at present, there is not the least prospect of our departure. We passed a very agreeable evening at our new host's, who really carried his hospitality very far, since, for our sake alone, he procured the only piano-forte to be had here.

I have now to tell the crowning point of our whole journey,—our visit to the site of Carthage. To-day we saw with our own eyes how vain are the mightiest works of human hands, and how Time's unsparing scythe mows down almost every trace of them. The most delightful weather favoured our excursion—weather such as we sometimes enjoy in the cold north, when spring comes to us as a new guest from foreign climes. We were unable to procure saddle-horses, and were forced to content ourselves with a box, holding four seats, and dignified with the name of a Maltese carriage. It awaited us close by the Marine Gate, since no wheel carriage of any kind can ply within the town. We were eating a hasty breakfast

in the parlour, when Mr. L—— suddenly burst into the room exclaiming, "My God, what news from Europe!" A sailing-vessel blown hither from Marseilles in three days by favourable winds, had brought the most incredible political intelligence. Alas! I would gladly have heard nothing to-day of Europe, but have lived altogether in the past, in the Africa of Queen Dido's times; and yet this news was news that would be heard, and it was of a nature to fill every European mind with the most serious thoughts. Louis-Philippe's dynasty is fallen! But it is not my cue to speak of this, but of our tour to Carthage.

About 10 o'clock, we left the hotel to walk to our carriage, which was waiting for us at the Marine Gate. We drove a long way through one of the suburbs, and then passed through the outer gate, which bears the name of Khartaginah, and is, indeed, the only thing in Tunis whose appellation gives any indication that such a town as Carthage ever existed. Beyond the gate, all appearance of anything like a road ceased at once, and we were mercilessly bumped along over a broad plain of hardened mire, with holes in it so deep, that we were quite prepared to see one of the horses break a leg, or one of the wheels part from the creaking carriage. Matters improved in the course of half an hour. The ground became smoother; the hitherto flat and dreary landscape assumed a livelier character, and even presented a charming and genuine oriental aspect. We left the sea a little to our right,

and saw nothing of it but a small glittering silver strip, forming a fringe to the noble hills of El Nessass and Hammamlif, but broken by countless fine olive trees. There were several tribes in the olive grove; but as each tent was gaily hung round with olive branches, in order to protect its inhabitants from cold and wet, or at a later season from the sun's rays, it was not easy to distinguish the tents from the trees. The fresh emerald green of the young corn contrasted beautifully with the solemn foliage of the old olive trees, which extend along the left to the summit of a gentle acclivity, named Belvedere, where the European fashionables are fond of riding on horseback in the fine season. We saw sometimes near us colossal fragments of a great aqueduct, of which more hereafter. We met not one human being in the whole journey; but so filled was my mind with the majestic, mournful character of the region, that seemed brooding over its past splendour, that I was almost unconscious of the lapse of two hours and a half, at the end of which we reached the hall near Carthage, where Louis-Philippe has erected a small chapel to the memory of St. Louis.

The death of this Christian King, and the events connected with it, seem to me too interesting to be passed by without a brief notice. At the time when the regency of Tunis was under the sway of a prince whom the French historians call Omar-el-Muley-Mytauca, Louis IX., King of France, made a crusade

against that country. The object of the expedition was to destroy a pirate-hold, that not only rendered the Mediterranean sea unsafe, but also assailed the succours sent to the Christian armies in Palestine, and supplied the Sultan of Egypt with horses, weapons, and soldiers. The Crusaders believed too that the subjugation of Tunis would facilitate their passage to the Holy Land.

In July, 1270, the French ships sailed into the bay of Tunis, and took possession of the native land of Hannibal, with the words—"We take to ourselves this country in the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of his representative, Louis, King of France."

The monarch resolved, before assaulting Tunis, to subdue Carthage; for at that period several handsome buildings had been recently erected, and a strongly fortified commercial town flourished on the site of the old city. Speaking of St. Louis' expedition, Châteaubriand says: "No sooner had he crossed the sea, than fortune seemed to desert him, and he was destined to present to the unbelievers a rare example of heroism in adversity." St. Louis saw clearly that his design would remain impracticable, so long as he was without the succour he expected from his brother, Charles I., King of Sicily. He was, therefore, obliged to entrench himself on the isthmus, and there his army was attacked by an epidemic, that reduced it to one half in a few days; besides which, the hot sun of Africa was fatal to many of the soldiers who

had been used to more temperate climates. To add to the sufferings of the Christians, the Moors devised machines by which they threw up the hot sand into the air, which being driven against the Christians, by the strong south wind, inflicted on them an artificial simoom, like that which travellers in the Desert are exposed to encounter. The living were not numerous enough to bury the dead; the camp ditches were soon filled with corpses. Most of the nobles and gentlemen in the army, including the King's favourite son, the Duke de Nevers, had already fallen victims to the pestilence, when Louis himself was attacked by it. Feeling his end approaching, the King ordered himself to be laid on a bed of ashes, and while he was there awaiting death with clasped hands and eyes raised to heaven, the King of Sicily's fleet was descried in the offing. Unfortunate soldiers, who themselves had but a few hours to live, crawled from their death-beds to look at the expiring monarch. The air rang with the trumpets of the Sicilian crusaders, as they landed; but, alas! their help had been so long delayed as to be useless. No answer having been returned to his signals, Charles landed with sad forebodings in his heart; and scarcely had he set foot on the shore ere he perceived that the sentinels stood with woe-begone faces and lance-points lowered to the ground. He rushed into his royal brother's tent, and there, on the humble couch, the latter had chosen for himself, he beheld a corpse. This happened on the 25th of

August, 1270. In 1840, the present Bey, Achmet, bestowed on King Louis-Philippe the hill eastward of Goletta, which has borne the name of Mont St. Louis since the 25th of August, 1841, the date of the consecration of the chapel erected thereon to the memory of the canonized monarch. This hill is one of the highest points of old Carthage. The army of St. Louis was encamped in the immediate vicinity of the ruins of that city; and his brother, Charles I., pitched his camp about four miles further off, for fear of the epidemic. A few days after the death of St. Louis, the Moors made an attack on the Christians, but met with such furious resistance from the French, English, and Italians, that they were driven to flight with a loss of 3,000 men. Several other battles, in which the Crusaders were likewise victorious, proved to the sovereign of Tunis that the enemy's army was superior to his own. He had therefore no alternative but to solicit peace of Charles I., and he obtained it on the following condition: Tunis was to pay all the costs of the expedition; merchants trading with Tunis were to be free from all tolls; lastly, Tunis was to pay King Charles I. of Sicily, a yearly tribute of forty thousand piastres. The treaty having been concluded, Charles and his army returned to Europe with much booty. He had his brother's entrails, &c., preserved in the noble church of Monreale, near Palermo, but the heart and the body of the monarch rest in the Cathedral of St. Denis.

The chapel dedicated to St. Louis is of no intrinsic merit. It is built in rather a tasteless Gothic style, and over the door is this inscription, "Louis-Philippe, Roi des Français, a érigé ce monument en l'an 1841 sur la place où expira le Roi, St. Louis, son aïeul." Within the chapel there is nothing but a statue of St. Louis standing on the altar. About it there is a well-kept garden, enclosed with a wall, with a prospect towards the sea, which is among the grandest I have ever seen. The sea is about half-a-mile off, with nothing but a ploughed field between it and the spectators, so that nothing obstructs the range of vision. The view which so fascinated me this day, and which I still think of with delight, is to me a new proof that simplicity is always the concomitant of the beautiful and the sublime. The fine chain of hills beyond the bay, the bold forms of which might vie with those of Greece, was so illuminated that every inlet, chasm, and shadow was distinctly visible. Not a breath of air ruffled the imposing stillness of the mirror-like bay. Fragrant wallflower, that beautifier of fallen palaces, bloomed in profusion in the chapel garden. Many notable fragments and well-preserved objects of art are also tastefully arranged there. The most considerable is a white marble head, five or six feet high, and variously assigned to Juno, Minerva, or Hebe; for the few antiquarians who have come this way are not agreed on that point, and for my part I must modestly abstain from pronouncing a verdict.

upon the question, though the diadem led me to conjecture that the wearer was the blue-eyed Pallas Athene. The pedestal on which the head is set, bears the inscription, "Trouvé dans les mines de Carthage, 10 Août, 1847, et donné par son A. R. le Bey de Tunis à Monsieur de Laporte, Gérant du Consulat-général de France."

With the exception of two very small pieces wanting in the eyelids, the head is as well preserved as though it just came from under the sculptor's chisel. It reminded me of the celebrated mask in the Villa Ludovisi in Rome, though the expression of the latter is finer. The colossal head must have been intended to be fixed over some portico, for where the neck ends it is carefully rounded off, and presents nothing of a fractured appearance. Two finely fluted columns are among the chief ornaments of the garden, and are seen to great advantage against the soft transparent sky. Close by one of them, which stands to the right of the entrance, is a fountain tastefully constructed of various handsome fragments. The water gushes out of a pedestal, supporting the torso of a female figure, executed with great skill, and it flows into an oblong basin, the floor of which is of fine mosaic, representing crabs, fish, sepiæ, &c., on a white ground. The torso is of fine white marble, and the pedestal is inscribed: "Statue de Thisdrus: mosaïque de Selecta, 1845." We now bade farewell to this spot, where a monument erected by a king to the fame of his noble ancestor,

on the savage coast of Africa, presents to the charmed eye of the traveller a gratifying token of civilization, and we directed our steps to the few extant relics of the great city of old.

Wild beasts and a barbarous people now dwell on the spot where Carthage flourished for seven hundred years in the opulence and vigour of commercial enterprise. Cæsar planted a colony on its site, which was renewed by Augustus. The city revived again in some degree, but was burnt down by Maxentius, A.D. 312. The Vandals ruled the land from A.D. 429, to A.D. 533, when the city was taken by Belisarius, in the reign of Justinian. In 698 it was totally destroyed by the Saracens, and it has ever since remained under Mussulman sway, except during the short period when the French were here in possession in 1270, and the Spaniards under Charles V. in 1535. But what is there now to be seen of this once dreaded rival of Rome? What may the traveller's eye discern of the magnificence that had its seat here of yore? Nothing!

> Giace l'alta Cartagine, e appena segni
> Dell' alte sue ruine il lido serba.

Too literally true, alas, are these words. The very name of this proud mistress of mighty armies and fleets, this queen of commerce, to whom Africa, Spain, Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, and even Italy had to bend, is now almost an alien sound for the present inha-

bitants of the land. Sic transit gloria mundi! At this day a single tent, pitched on the strand, and occupied by some Arab custom-house officers—very suspicious looking personages with long guns—the harbour of Abd-el-Apiz, the fort where St. Louis fell, and the little chapel erected to him on the spot by Louis-Philippe, are the only human edifices to be seen on a spot where in former days proud walls enclosed almost a million of brave warriors and busy citizens. Except it may be a stray soldier walking to or from the fort, or a goat-herd resting in a pensive attitude, whilst his goats are grazing, but who is certainly not meditating on the fortunes of Carthage, there is not a living soul to be seen. Solitude and silence hold undisputed sway in this melancholy place. Of the fine temple of Juno, mentioned by Virgil—

> Hic templum Junoni ingens Sidonia Dido
> Condebat—

of that of Æsculapius, to which, as Arrian and Livy inform us, a majestic flight of sixty steps led up from the sea-shore, and all the other noble edifices that once stood here, nothing remains but a few fragments of marble columns, and of porphyry, rosso, verde, and giallo antico, little bits of lapis lazuli, and glassy lumps, the produce of an old conflagration, marking perhaps the spot where Hasdrubal's wife leaped from

the citadel into the flames with her children, to escape from the yoke of the insolent victor.

The hill on which the Byrsa stood was fenced on the south side by a triple wall, of the considerable height of forty-three feet between the towers, of which there was one at every five hundred feet. The towers were four stories high, with foundations thirty feet deep below the surface; and they were so constructed that beside the necessary provision for several months, they could contain three hundred elephants, four thousand horses, and twenty-four thousand men. The best preserved, or rather the only recognizable monument is a row of cisterns below Burgjedfed, or Burg Sidi Bosaid, or, as it is also called, Fort St. Louis, because the king fell there. These cisterns were supplied by an aqueduct reaching to the Zowwan mountain, a distance of seventy-five English miles. It has not escaped the hand of the destroyer, but its colossal fragments, which a traveller has happily compared to the bleached vertebræ of an enormous snake, are to be seen stretching far away over the hill of Arriana and the wide plain.

The little town Sidi Bosaid is, like Kaiwan, a safe asylum for malefactors; and it is only within the last eight years that Christians have been allowed to enter it. It is built on the ruins of a very extensive edifice, supposed by some to have been the temple of Ceres. The Moors identify their saint, Sidi Bosaid, who is buried in the town, and gives it his name, with St.

Louis. They allege that the French monarch abjured his religion on his death-bed, adopted the Mohammedan creed, and gave himself the name of Bosaid, that is to say 'Father of Blessedness.' On the sea-shore there are some scarcely distinguishable ruins, which, in the opinion of some travellers, belong to the foundations of the fine church devoted to St. Cyprian by the people of Arriana.

The declining sun reminded us of our journey homewards, and we walked to our carriage over ploughed fields strewn with splinters of ancient glass, bits of marble of all kinds, mosaic, and balls of lapis lazuli. What great treasures may possibly lie buried here! Fain would I have stopped at every step in hopes of finding ever so inconsiderable a coin. Mr. Ronald, who was with us on this excursion, wished to visit Lady Reade, our Consul's wife. The coachman was therefore ordered to drive to Abdellia, Sir Thomas's country house, two miles from Carthage, not much out of the direct road to Tunis, and formerly a palace of the Bey's. Though we had no letter of recommendation to our Consul, T—— went up stairs with Mrs. Lindon, in hopes of finding letters for us, whilst I remained in the carriage with F——; but before many minutes had elapsed, down came Sir Thomas, a venerable old gentleman, with his grown-up sons, to invite us in. Lady Reade, who has been for three-and-twenty years an inhabitant of Tunis, and has not been in Europe during the last twelve, must have been in

her youth a very beautiful woman. Not only has she very handsome and regular features, but her complexion, on which the African sun has not made the least impression, is as smooth and delicate as that of a girl of eighteen. Her figure, too, is commanding, and I ought properly to have said that she is still very handsome. Like her husband, she received us with great affability, as though we had been regularly recommended to her, or were among her old friends. Lady Reade told me that the ceiling of their town-house had fallen in, so that she was banished for the whole winter to the country, where she felt very lonely, the distance from Tunis being considerable, and hers being the only European family in the neighbourhood. It was her dinner-hour, and the usually large family-table was augmented by four covers for us; but we could not accept the intended hospitality, it being the inconvenient practice in Tunis to shut the gates at six o'clock, summer and winter, after which hour no carriage can enter the suburb. The conversation ran entirely on politics, and Sir Thomas Reade confirmed, by letters received by the same sailing-vessel, the incredible news communicated to us by Mr. L—— before our departure. Our new friendly acquaintances would not let us go until we had promised to return soon, and for a longer visit. It was Sir Thomas Reade who was associated with Sir Hudson Lowe in keeping custody over Napoleon at St. Helena. Sir Thomas is accused of having treated his Imperial

prisoner with too great severity, but when I look in his thoroughly good-natured face, I cannot help thinking that the accusation is unfounded.

To get back into the direct course for Tunis, we passed through a number of little natural lanes hedged with prickly pear. The setting sun shed brilliant hues on the noble landscape, and great was our regret that we were not on horseback, for we could not look upon the beautiful landscape without *craning* out of our box; and whenever any of us tried the experiment, he was sure to be disturbed in his contemplation by an unmerciful bump that pitched him back upon his three companions.

What a horrid atmosphere I am writing in! At this season, the unfortunate traveller has only the choice of being stifled with smoke in these Moorish houses, or of being so chilled as not to be able to move a finger. The room below in which we take our meals, and which receives light only through three doors, opening on the small yard, is wanting in many particulars, and has many that could well be spared. Among the latter, is the kitchen lying opposite, the door of which, opening also on the yard, affords one but too deep an insight into the mysteries of the culinary art. Near the kitchen, is a great basket filled with fowls, innocent predestined victims, who unconscious of their danger, stretch their necks out between the bars of their cage, and eagerly pick up the corn strewed before them. But hark! a sound of some one

whetting a knife; and now the instrument of death gleams in the hand of a white night-capped executioner. Deliberately he takes his way to the quiet aviary, and fills its inmates with dread and confusion, whilst his death-fraught hand selects a victim. Loud and louder grow the desperate cries of the doomed one; at once, there is a death-like silence; he has suffered. His feathery garments are plucked off in haste; samples of them come floating upon the air, and settle sometimes on our plates; the unfortunate fowl has exchanged the cage for the roasting-oven, and is served up to us before we are aware. It may be imagined how much the appetite is improved by such spectacles.

XVI.

Camel riding—Carnival in Tunis—Naimeh's adventure.

March 9th.

After a visit from Lady Reade, who came to ask us to dine with her next Friday, and stay over night, I was inclined to quit the darkness of my smoky room for the sunshine, and as T—— had ridden out with Mr. Lindon to his farm on one of the latter's handsome horses, I resolved to make the day memorable by a ride on the back of a camel. I imparted my design to F——, and we proceeded to one of the

many caravanserais between the two walls, where there were camels lying in hundreds. Our dragoman having explained our wishes to an Arab, F—— had to make the first attempt, and mount the hump of a kneeling camel. The motion of the beast is, in F——'s opinion, by no means so disagreeable as it is commonly represented to be, and, in my opinion, the act of mounting and dismounting are far worse than the riding itself. In fact, these operations seemed to me so critical, that I was deterred from mounting by the apprehension that I might not have courage to get down again, and, consequently, that I might be doomed to wear out my days on the back of a camel in Tunis. Though, perhaps, it might have afforded me some satisfaction in this way to have founded a new sect that might rival the stylitæ of old, still I thought it better to content myself with riding a camel in theory, particularly as I should have been obliged to back the animal like a man, which would have exposed me to the jeers and laughter of a very numerous public.

My most earnest advice to all future travellers is, to avoid putting their noses out of doors in Tunis on this day—Shrove Tuesday. The Maltese are the only persons who keep Carnival, but their way of keeping it is such as to make me almost wish I might never again hear the word Carnival uttered. Gangs of the dirtiest and most disgusting masks paraded the streets with the most abominable music, followed by

an impenetrable throng of natives; and for flowers, and confetti, the masks found substitutes in what they could snatch from the burthens of camels, laden with oil, or newly-flayed skins, or rubbish, and dung. I was glad enough to get back to my despised room, and as the rest of the day afforded me no sight worth recording, I will relate an occurrence that interested me much. It was communicated to me, of her own knowledge, by the wife of one of the consuls here; and it gives a melancholy picture of the moral condition of this people. What I am about to relate bears, perhaps, the air of a romance, but as I know that it actually happened not long ago, I do not hesitate to report it.

As the women of this country are rigorously forbidden to hold intercourse of any kind with any man but their husband, they are attended in sickness by medical practitioners of their own sex, as is sometimes the case among our own poorer classes. One night as Naimeh, one of these female physicians, had just lain down to rest after a busy day, she was suddenly roused by some one knocking at the door—an unusual circumstance—for being one of the most eminent of her profession, she was never summoned at night without previous notice. She, therefore, paid no heed to the call at first; but the knocking was continued with such increasing vehemence that she began to think the case must be an urgent one, and getting out of bed, she looked out through a small opening in the

door, and inquired who it was that disturbed her at that unusual hour. "Make haste, make [illegible], good sister," replied an unknown male voice in tones of great anxiety, "your help is sorely needed. Come at once, or it may soon be too late." Familiar with human suffering in various forms, old Naimeh's heart was readily susceptible of pity. She hesitated no longer, but hastily putting on her ample garments, she stood beside the stranger in the street before he had time to renew his pressing entreaties. But to her horror and dismay, she found her late suppliant transformed at once into an imperious tyrant. In an instant, she found herself muffled in a thick cloth tied tightly over her eyes, and mouth, and grasped by a strong hand that hurried her along in silence through the deserted streets, she knew not whither. "Three hundred piastres for you (about £10), if you do my bidding without resistance; if not, you are a dead woman." These were the only words that fell in a grim whisper on the ear of the terrified woman, as she was dragged through many winding streets. At last, when her limbs could scarcely support her farther, her conductor stopped, gave a signal, and the gate of an almost royal mansion opened to admit the pair. When it closed behind them, the stranger removed the bandage from her face, and led her in silence into the innermost apartments, where everything indicated that she was in one of the most opulent Moorish houses of the town. All around her was pomp and splendour, but not

one human sound reached her ear. An awful silence reigned in that abode of luxury; and poor Naimeh, who well knew the barbarous customs of her country in certain respects, had a fearful foreboding of the work which she had been so mysteriously brought to do; perhaps it was not the first time she had been forced to give her aid to such deeds. "Do your office, and beware of uttering a word about what you see here," were the very last words whispered in her ear by the stranger (whose features she could not exactly discern in the dim light) as he pushed her into a little chamber, leaving the heavy silken curtain, that served as a door, half undrawn behind her.

On a sumptuous couch, in that small room, lay a beautiful girl apparently about fourteen years of age. No sound escaped her lips, but her sweet countenance gave token of great physical suffering, and still deeper mental anguish. Naimeh's practised eye quickly perceived that the young creature was about to become a mother; nor was it long before a fine male babe lay in the mid-wife's arms. Tenderly did the fair young mother gaze on her first-born; but her joy was mingled with some harrowing anticipation, and her large, gazelle eyes turning full of tears upon the mid-wife seemed to say, "Oh, why have you let me live?" Meanwhile, delighted that her mysterious mission had taken no worse a turn, old Naimeh endeavoured to comfort, and encourage her patient, but her words seemed quite lost upon the poor, woe-begone girl.

The stranger now stalked into the chamber, and ordered Naimeh to withdraw into the larger room. She obeyed of course, but moved by curiosity and compassion, she placed herself behind the hanging-door, so as to see all that passed, without herself being seen. The stranger went up to the bed-side, and raising the girl's faint head with one hand, he whispered to her to drink from a cup which he held in the other. As soon as she was aware of his purpose, she uttered a loud shriek, and stretching out her white arms, to defend herself, sank back exhausted, after a short struggle. The stranger quietly laid down the cup, took the infant in his arms, and showing it to its almost fainting mother, said something to her in a low tone, and with a peculiar smile upon his cold, stern features. Potent words they must have been, though spoken so softly; for the timid girl seemed at once possessed with steadfast resolution. The stranger lays down the child, and again presents the cup to his victim, who, as she takes it from his hand, casts a heart-rending look upon her babe, a look that seemed to say, "Oh, may happiness attend my boy, for twice I am a mother to him, twice I give him life." She puts the cup to her lips, and before she has drained it to the bottom, her young life has departed from its lovely tenement. The cup was poisoned. The murderer looked for a moment on his work without changing a muscle, then turning to Naimeh as coolly as if he had only killed a partridge, he pointed to the corpse,

and ordered her to do what was necessary, and be silent for her life. The old woman obeyed, though fear and horror so shook her frame, that she had scarcely strength enough to prepare the remains of the beautiful victim for their last resting-place.

> Pallida no, ma più che neve bianca,
> Che senza vento in un bel colle fiocchi
> Parea posar come persona stanca:

So lay the victim of a father's wrath. Nor did one victim suffice; the babe still lived, and with loud cries seemed to bewail its mother's murder; but a powder laid on its lips by the assassin's hand silenced it for ever.

As soon as old Naimeh had laid out both corpses for interment, the stranger again bandaged her eyes, and led her back to her own house, just as he had taken her from it. It was high time, for day was dawning, and a glimpse might have enabled Naimeh to identify the perpetrator of the dreadful deed she had witnessed. On parting from her, the unknown gave her a purse containing the promised 300 piastres. Whether or not she accepted it, I cannot tell; I hope, for her own honour, that she rejected the murderer's money. Be that as it may, Naimeh soon afterwards was seized with a severe illness, and as these female doctors have great confidence in European ladies, she sent her son to the wife of our Consul to obtain advice and assistance from her, and thus it was that the frightful occurrence became known to me. To this

hour, Naimeh has no notion where she was on the night in question; and it will, in all likelihood, remain for ever an impenetrable mystery.

XVII.

A ride to the Bardo—Tunisian landscape.

March 8th.

In the East, it is only on horseback one enjoys life truly; and a delightful ride, from which we are just returned, has satisfied me that with a free use of that healthy exercise one may lead a very tolerable existence, even in Tunis. Mr. Ronald was again our conductor, and at his suggestion, we directed our course to the Bardo, the Bey's residence, and the Manonbah, where there are the handsomest Moorish country-houses, and gardens. In order to have as little as possible of the town to pass through, we made for the nearest gate (de la Marine), and then through the suburb to the gate leading to the Bardo. The further one goes from the town, the grander and more beautiful does the wide landscape become. One may be well acquainted with Algiers and its charming vicinity, yet have no conception of this kind of natural scenery; nothing but the pencil of Horace Vernet could convey an idea of it to the Europeans. In Europe, we call a region beau-

tiful where everything smiles around us, where far and near the eye rests with delight on fine objects, well-cultivated fields, handsome country-seats speaking of opulence, forest-clad hills, and cliffs crowned with the ruined castles of the olden time. Nothing of all this is to be seen in a Tunisian landscape, which consists of but two elements, the sky, and a plain bounded by beautiful hills. The eye ranges far and wide before it fixes upon any definite object, and it is that very fact which imparts to the landscape that unspeakable greatness and sublimity, that makes one's breath flow freer: for when I say that I see round me nothing but a desolate, sandy plain, the uniformity of which is not broken even by a stone, and that some very faintly-marked mountains on the horizon, and here and there some ruined or yet well-preserved forts are the only discernible variations of form, it certainly seems incredible that such a region can enchant the beholder, and yet it is true. Here everything speaks of the past; a glance transports one backwards through thousands of years; all around is redolent of history and poetry. Now we see a blind grey-headed Bedouin, surrounded with his blooming grandchildren, winning a few copper coins from the charity of the passers-by, by playing on his bagpipes, as in the time of our Saviour; now a richly-clad Moor dashes by us like a Herold of yore; sometimes we see in the distance, endless caravans of laden camels, following the little ass, their leader. And what a sky over all! what a

clear transparent atmosphere! what a hallowed stillness possessing all nature!

After we had ridden three miles, in continual admiration, we passed closer by the Bardo. That royal residence, with its walls, bulwarks, towers, and ditches, is like a little fortified town. It may indeed be regarded as one, for not fewer than four thousand persons are employed within it for the court. The word Bardo is by some understood to mean cold, while others believe that it is a Tunisian appropriation of the name of the Pardo of Madrid, the letter P not being found in the Arabic alphabet. It strikes me that every architect that ever was in Tunis must have tried his hand on the fortress, for it consists of a medley of the most tasteless buildings. The only consistency in this style of architecture is the invariable inconsistency of its fantastic irregularity. Painted red, yellow, and green, like a bey's castle on one of our stages, the Bardo has, to our eyes, only the appearance of a gaudy toy, but a gigantic toy indeed. There are plenty of grated windows of women's apartments, but the number of their occupants had dwindled down to one, for the present Bey it seems is not an ardent admirer of our sex. Drums beat, and the sound of military movements reached the ear from within the walls of this huge seat of pomp, whilst immediately without them some of the most denuded of the tribes had pitched their tents, the inhabitants of which, though looking to European eyes like the veriest beggars,

are often possessed of considerable wealth in land and cattle.

Casting my eyes upon some broad grated windows, that reached to the ground, I saw several ugly figures that excited my deep compassion, as I took them for lunatics, or unfortunate prisoners. But I was not a little mistaken, for Mr. Roland told me these very ill-looking personages were members of the guardia nobile in undress, whom their curiosity to see a European lady on horseback had drawn to the grated window. The natives not only regarded us with scorn, but even took pains to devise how they might affront or annoy us. During our ride an impertinent Moor brushed by me at full gallop; and as if he thought that was not doing enough to frighten me, he roared as loud as he could, and fired off one of his pistols as he passed me. Fortunately the horses of this country are all accustomed to such manœuvres, and although they are very spirited, they have the excellent peculiarity of not shying at anything.

After we had passed Manombah we saw, at some distance, the fine aqueduct, which can be traced as far as Zowwan. The country here resembles the Campagna of Rome, almost as much as one drop of water does another. But as we had no escort, Mr. Roland thought it more prudent not to continue our ride any further. The district bears no good repute; a murder was committed in it a short while before in open day, and not one individual is to be seen in it who does

not carry his enormously long gun and two good pistols.

XVIII.

Prospects of departure.

March 10th.

A STEAMER from Malta! a steamer from Malta! cried Mr. L. cheerily, as he hastened up to our carriage, when we drove up to Sir Thomas Reade's door between five and six o'clock this evening. The words fell heavily, like an irrevocable sentence on my heart, for they indicated that we must either leave Tunis within twelve hours, perhaps after a week's very unsatisfactory sojourn, or that missing that opportunity, we should run the chance of remaining there many weeks, perhaps months. What children we are! How often have my letters expressed the strongest discontent at my exile in Tunis, and the discomforts of this African journey; how often have I been filled with intense longing for my dear Italy! And now, when a bridge was laid down for my return to old Europe, which I ought to have hailed with as much joy as the lost wayfarer hears the tinkling of the mastiff's bell, my heart, must I confess it? almost sank within me. In

F.'s features I read plainly the same conflicting feelings portrayed that possessed myself, as Mr. L. said over and over again to him, "You had better not lose such an opportunity." T.'s countenance, on the other hand, beamed with gladness. The joy of redemption out of the barbarian land spoke in every lineament, and this contributed to vex me still more.

The news of the arrival of the Volcano in La Goletta caused universal excitement in the great chateau of Abdellia. Lady Reade had come down to receive us, and Sir Thomas instantly fastened upon Mr. L., who had gallopped in nine minutes from La Goletta, to learn from him how soon he might expect the captain of the Volcano with his despatches. Lady Reade conducted us to our rooms, to refresh our toilettes after our three hours' drive; and when we soon afterwards assembled round the blazing hearth in the drawing-room, the table was already piled mountains high with newspapers.

Presently Sir Thomas came in, accompanied by Captain Crang; with whom he conversed apart on the political intelligence he brought, and the diplomatic mission with which he was charged to the Bey. The fresh arrival of a steam-boat, with authentic news from Europe, is always a very important event for the inhabitants of Tunis, but above all for those of Abdellia, particularly at a time like this, when we had received the most incredible intelligence from France.

The accounts from Paris brought by the Volcano are five days later than those received by the sailing vessel from Marseilles. The news of the suicide of a very distinguished preacher named Irving, who had lately spent a month with our hospitable entertainers at Abdellia, cast a gloom over the whole party. Lady Reade was inexhaustible in her praise of the departed. He had gone in the last steamer to Malta, where he was found one morning in bed, weltering in his blood. He was a man of earnest religious feeling, and of the most open disposition. Here then was a new proof how little a man's inward state can be judged of from outward appearances, and what inexplicable contradictions are harboured in the unfathomed depths of the human heart.

March 11th.

At four o'clock I was waked by the departure of Sir Thomas Reade's coach-and-four for the Bardo, where the Bey gives audience twice a week, repairing thither for that purpose from Hamamlif. Sir Thomas had to communicate to the Bey the contents of the despatches he had just received; and as the maxim in this country, no less than elsewhere, is first come first served, and the distance from Abdellia to the Bardo

is not inconsiderable, old Sir Thomas was obliged to start out at that early hour.

Captain Crang had returned to the Volcano, and Mr. Lindon to Tunis, so that the party at the breakfast-table was considerably diminished. The uncertainty in which our minds hung, or rather still hang, suspended as to our departure, is intolerable. Our departure from Tunis seems to me, as it were, the closing symphony of our travels. I hold open before me an interesting book of natural and national description, and I have only glanced at its pages sufficiently to convince myself that I should read it with much pleasure to the end, but now an importunate hand closes the pleasant volume for ever. The Volcano methinks is the hand that does that unfriendly office. One does not easily give up in haste an expedition that has cost one so dear. Every transition in life is irksome to me; it is with a heavy heart I take up the pilgrim's staff, symbolical of privations and dangers; but with a still heavier heart do I lay it down again, to put my neck under the yoke of a tame, every day life in a civilized city. In truth, I belong already somewhat to the Bedouin genus; and with the bronzed dwellers in the tent I exclaim, "What need have I of an abiding place? Am I not but a bird of passage on this earth? What more can heart desire than a sympathizing companion, a gallant steed, a faithful dog, and a boundless plain!"

Our destiny could not be determined in Abdellia,

because it was before all things necessary to know, would the captain of the Volcano consent to take us with him, for these government steamers are not destined to carry passengers. We therefore took leave of Lady Reade, and drove back to Tunis about noon. Endless seemed to us the three hours' journey before we reached the city gate. F. and I were continually asking each other, with looks of deep import, "What is to be done?" though each of us, I believe, was inwardly resolved to remain. To what I may compare the dire conflict that distracted T.'s breast, I really cannot tell. The alternative of going away without us, or of voluntarily resigning himself to a prolongation of his captivity here, is so unspeakably distressing to our esteemed friend, that he is at present in a dilemma, such as he never before dreamed of. F. is this moment come back from the English consulate. The Volcano sails to-morrow evening, and the captain consents to take us with him. Let us hope that the night will bring counsel and resolve; and, above all, that it will tranquillize T.'s perturbed spirit.

XIX.

A disappointment—Moorish customs—visit of a Jewess.

March 12th.

If anything could drive me out of Tunis, it would be the incessant knaveries of the Maltese, at whose mercy one is laid without defence the moment the procuring of saddle-horses or a vehicle comes in question. F.'s great desire and mine to see a little more of Tunis, was sorely discomfited poor T.; we have resolved to let the Volcano go without us, and to wait for the next steamer, come when it may.

This was one of those days when one feels an irresistible impulse to seek the open air, and cries out with Richard, "A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse!" in order to revel in the glorious aspect of nature. But though we had covenanted with the Maltese that the horses we had chosen should be every day at our service, and though we had expressly ordered them for the present one, we nevertheless waited in vain for them the whole day. The imperious voice that urged us afield cried to us in vain, and our longings had to content themselves with sharing the pastime of the Tunisian cats, as we enjoyed the

fresh air and cheering sunshine in a promenade on the house-top. Bewailing our hard lot to Mr. Lindon, with whom we made the evening pass pleasantly with the help of music, chess, and back-gammon, he advised us to hire horses of the natives, unbroken horses, altogether unacquainted with European equestrianism and ladies' saddles, and he promised to give us his aid in the matter.

To-morrow, at ten o'clock, he expects us at his farm, to spend a day in Arab fashion with him under a tent, which he has pitched to receive us on the road to Hamamlif, where he has large tracts of land, and where he intends to regale us with kuskussu and other Arab dishes. Now I am quite as curious to know how we are to manage our unbroken horses, as how we shall like our entertainment in the tent. These anticipations for the morrow have consoled me for the wasted anticipations of to-day. We took leave of Mr. Lindon with the assurance that we should be with him under his tent at ten in the morning.

March 13th.

But we had reckoned without our host. A tropic rain poured down incessantly from the dawn of day; the storm raged as if the world was coming to an end, and poor heart-broken T. could only ring his hands,

and exclaim over and over again, "Oh that we had gone away in the Volcano."

A rainy day is here a far more disagreeable thing than any where else, because it at once puts a stop for a long while to all communication, a few hours' rain making the streets so dirty that the few who venture abroad can only do so on stilts. To-day our large room served as a refectory; we did not dine in it indeed, but Mr. and Mrs. Roland, Mr. Lindon, and some French officers gave us their company, and we spent some hours in conversation about Tunis, and the manners and customs of this singular people.

The marriage customs of the Moors are certainly those which most strike the European. Until the wedding-day, when the relations have retired, and the bride-groom goes to his bride (zonam solvendam) the pair have never seen each other. So lightly is this important step taken, and just as lightly is the bond of wedlock dissolved among the Mussulmans. A divorce costs the husband only five French sous. If he is afterwards inclined to take back his divorced wife, he cannot do so until she becomes the wife of another man. A Moor we know parted from his wife some days ago, because she had gone out without his permission. During her absence from home, her mother sent word to her that she was at the point of death, and earnestly desired to see her daughter, for the last time. The wife thinking that on so peculiar an occasion, she might be excused for going out of doors

without waiting for her husband's leave, went at once to her dying mother. So great, however, was the husband's indignation on his return home, that although she had been married to him twenty years, and in all that time had never crossed his threshold except to go to the bath, he divorced her next day. A Moor must support his divorced wife for four months and-a-half, that is to say, until it is certain that she is not pregnant; but if she bears a child within nine months from the date of her divorce, he must provide for her until the child is two years old. Every wedding here is followed by a long course of festivities. Among the poorer classes, they last almost a whole week.

A remarkable period which I should be glad to witness here, is that of the Ramadan or Ramazan, and the festive season that follows it. The monthly fast of the Ramadan is very strictly observed in the regency of Tunis. The Moor prepares for it even in the months of Rejeb and Shaban, which precede that of the Ramadan, by avoiding all luxurious beverages. "You shall fast," says the law of the Prophet, "in Ramadan, the month in which the Koran was sent down from Heaven." In that period, during a whole month from sunrise to sunset, the Moor is debarred not only from the enjoyment of the least particle of food and drink, but also from tobacco and snuff; nay, such is the severity of the law that it forbids him to be near the smoke of an unbeliever's pipe, or even refresh his lips with water. At sunset a cannon-shot is fired, or

a flag is hung out from some mosque, and after that signal, Nature may resume her rights until the next sunrise. At the end of the month of abstinence and penance, the Arabs celebrate the festival of Ede Saghir, which lasts three days, and six months afterwards another called Ede Essagher Kabu, which is held especially in honour of the pilgrims returning from Mecca.

The departure of the pilgrims from Tunis, and their preparations for the journey, must certainly afford a most interesting spectacle to us Europeans. The pilgrimage is usually undertaken towards the end of May. During the festival of the Ramadan, every Mussulman is bound by the law of the Koran to pass three days in his native town in the bosom of his family, and this law is here very conscientiously observed. All pilgrims from the Barbary States, bound to Mecca, assemble in Tunis, where they take ship for Alexandria. They come from Morocco, Algiers, Constantina, the highlands and gorges of the Atlas, and the Zahara. While awaiting the day of sailing, they encamp in the space between the walls, near the port-gate, where they pitch their tents, and prepare the provisions they are to take with them into the Desert. They choose some man, who is in good repute amongst them, for their leader on the journey. Some of the pilgrims go to Mecca in fulfilment of a vow made in a moment of despair; others, who are acquainted with the dangers of a pilgrimage through the Desert, undertake it

without hope of return, and voluntarily encounter that martyrdom, as a happy ending of their sad existence, or as an atonement for their sins. Many of them have already lost their reason in the excess of their fanatic zeal. As soon as they catch a sight of the ship that is to convey them to Alexandria, they shout for joy, as though they had already beheld the native town of the Prophet. They rush in troops into the boat at the risk of being swamped, and pay no heed to the warnings of the sailors. Every ship bound for Alexandria is compelled, I believe, to take a certain number of pilgrims. It happened lately that a ship sailed away with all who succeeded in forcing their way on board. On the passage, there was a great scarcity of provisions, and the captain found himself obliged to throw half the unfortunate pilgrims overboard, and yet when he arrived in Alexandria, he had more pilgrims on board than his appointed number.

I forgot yesterday to mention the visit of our dragoman's daughter. She is a Jewess of seventeen, lately married, and she came to us dressed all in her best, that we might bestow our entire admiration upon her, for therein consists the most exquisite enjoyment known to the Moorish women. The costume of this country is exceedingly tasteless. A prole stuffed as thick as one's arm, which the Jewish women wear round their waists, is the only thing in which their dress differs from that of the Mussulman women. This girdle is called *zonnar*, a word evidently derived from the Greek *zone*.

Our Jewish visitor wore an unusually thick gold chain wound several times round her neck, and having suspended from it several pieces of ill-cut coral to serve as charms against the evil eye; her ear-rings were of remarkably fine large pearls. From the back of her head hung a whole wardrobe; first two large, heavy tassels of silver, and blue silk, at the ends of long ribbands; then two gay-coloured handkerchiefs embroidered with silver, and next a black kerchief to show that she was married. Her whole person looked like a promiscuous heap of rich stuffs; to describe the forms of her various garments were impossible. Half of the most garment-like pieces she wore were of lilac coloured silk, the other half of silver grey silk; the sleeves were richly brocaded, and looked like tortoise-shell cases for her enormously thick arms. When she took leave of us she wrapped herself up in no end of a shawl of fine white woollen stuff; it must have been at least eight ells long. It muffled her from head to foot, and it required no little dexterity to put it on in that way without covering the eyes or letting one of the ends trail on the ground. The eyebrows, eyelids, and nails of this young beauty were tinged with henna, as usual with Moorish women.

This favourite adornment, which they deem indispensable to the completion of their charms, is obtained by drying and pulverizing the leaves of a plant called alhenna or henna, large plantations of which grow at Gab on the eastern coast of Africa. Every market

place in the Tunisian regency affords the Moorish fair ones a supply of this admired cosmetic. The depth of colour is proportionate to the greater or less quantity of the powder employed, but the most usual shade is a fine bright orange yellow. They not only disfigure with it their feet, hands, eyes, and lips, but even disguise with it the fine natural hue of their hair. When our bedizened Jewess took leave of us, I was obliged to kiss her on both cheeks, and so overpouring was the scent of the attar of rose, musk, and countless mixed perfumes which she exhaled, that for a moment I could have fancied myself in the shop of the famous perfume dealer, Ludovico, in Constantinople.

XX.

The Jews in ~~Tunis~~—A tragical story.

March 14th.

"I congratulate you on your seeing your companions once more safe and sound, for I really feared for their lives;" said Mr. Lindon to me, as he came into the room with the two gentlemen, whom he had just been accompanying to the bazaars to make some purchases. Shortly after they left the hotel they were fastened upon by an importunate Jew, and so tormented by him, that F., to whom he had particularly attached himself,

after threatening him to no purpose, at last lost patience and knocked the fellow down. The thing was done before Mr. Lindon could prevent it, but, fortunately for the three Franks, he perceived from the fellow's black turban that he was a Jew. The beaten man's co-religionists who happened to be present were loud in their outcries; but so humble and oppressed is their poor race that not one of them durst avenge another's wrong. Had F. dealt a Moor such a blow, he and his two companions would have been torn to pieces on the spot by the populace; but the poor Jews are so much hated here, that no Moor shewed the least inclination to take part with the beaten man.

The position of the Jews has, nevertheless, been much ameliorated in Tunis of late years; as a proof of which I will mention an occurrence which took place under Bey Hamúda in 1808, and which is not likely ever to find its parallel in present or future times; but

> I say this by the way; so don't look stern,
> But if you're angry, dearest, pass it by.

It happened at the period I have mentioned that a captain from Ragusa chanced to be walking one day in Tunis, in the place called El Bhar, when he was accosted by a Jew, who asked him to look at some valuable coins he had for sale. The captain consented, and accompanied the Jew to his house, where seeing that the latter showed no sign of

producing the coins, he pressed him to despatch. "Here is the rare coin I have for sale," said the Jew, leading the captain up to an alcove and drawing aside the curtain, behind which a beautiful young Moorish girl lay on a divan. The captain was thunderstruck; and whether from fidelity to his lately wedded wife, or from offended delicacy, he refused with indignation to be a party to the vile bargain. The Jew then demanded the captain's watch and money, which the latter refusing and endeavouring to escape with all speed, the Jew laid hold on him and a violent struggle ensued. The noise of the scuffle attracted the attention of the people in the streets, and the room was soon filled with Moors. Astounded and infuriated at the sight of the fair sinner on the divan, the crowd dragged the three delinquents to prison after beating them in the most ignominious manner. The poor captain was not allowed to say a word in his own exculpation, and after a wretched night spent in prison he was taken next morning with his two fellow captives before the judge, who, without suffering the accused to make the least defence, pronounced sentence of death, without appeal, upon all three. The poor innocent captain was straightway beheaded in front of the Casbah, and the girl was thrown into the lake. The wicked Jew was devoted to a more cruel death. A pile of dry wood was erected on the quay, and the Jew was laid upon it, after being clad in a shirt smeared with pitch and sulphur. The pile was lighted and shrieks of anguish soon told that

the flames had begun to reach their victim. Almost the whole population of Tunis had assembled to witness the horrid spectacle, and they echoed back the screams of the expiring wretch with yells of inhuman delight. Some of them even laid more wood on the pile with their own hands. Shortly after this horrible execution, the plague broke out in Tunis, and as the superstitious Moors came at last to regard this visitation as a punishment for the cruel death of the Jew, the precedent has never since been repeated.

XXI.

Mr. Davis—A Jewish wedding—Colonel Szczpanowski.

March 16th.

I FEEL as if we already belonged to the permanent European population of Tunis. We have become acquainted, and scarcely know how, with all the consuls and their families, and have met with so much kindness from them that I heartily rejoice at our settling down in Tunis, and T's christian resignation to that lot, for now I may hope to see many interesting things in Tunis. We are quite the lions of the day, and every one vies in contributing to our entertainment. Yesterday evening at a party at Mr. Davis's—a well-paid missionary of the Scottish church—I

learned that the English vice-consul and his wife are old acquaintances of our parents, and have often met us in London. You see then that I am no longer on strange ground; on the contrary, I feel quite at home, and for the present have dismissed all thoughts of Malta.

Mrs. Davis is another instance of the wonderful facility I have often observed in our English ladies of adapting themselves to any situation, however difficult. She was a totally inexperienced girl of seventeen when she married, and without having the remotest conception of the many cares attendant on marriage, she was transplanted hither out of a quiet English school. Instead of losing courage, as many would have done, and succumbing to the many difficulties that beset every settler in this place, she has overcome them all. She has already mastered the difficult Arabic language sufficiently to make herself very tolerably intelligible in her conversation with the natives. She not only educates her own two chidren, but with the help of an elder unmarried sister she presides over a small school. She keeps her household affairs in excellent order, and still finds time to devote a few hours to music, and is moreover as cheerful and light-hearted as a girl of seventeen. One must have had an insight into the disadvantages that European families have here to contend with, in order, adequately, to esteem and admire Mrs. Davis as I do.

She was good enough to propose yesterday evening

that we should accompany her to-day to a Jewish wedding, an offer which I thankfully accepted, imagining that she meant a wedding of Moorish Jews. But as the ceremony took place in an Italian family, I can only say, that I was heartily glad to escape from the abominable throng, hurry home, put on my riding habiliments, and mount my Arab. The opportunity enabled me, however, so far to increase my store of knowledge that I now fully recognize the striking truth of the term "Jewish wedding," as typically employed in Germany to express something particularly tumultuous, disorderly, and disgusting. The throng and squeezing began even in the court-yard of the house; and in the upper-rooms, where the ceremony took place, it reached such a pitch, that we were packed together like herrings. To stand up or escape out of the detestable atmosphere was out of the question, once we had jammed ourselves with great labour into our places. By way of special distinction I was seated beside the bride, who was tightly laced up in the ugliest possible European costume. The heat and the reeking exhalations were stifling, and I was in so piteous a condition, that I can remember nothing of the whole ceremony, but that the aged rabbi who officiated, trembled so much, that I expected every moment to have the contents of the glass of wine he held in his hands pitched into my lap. After the ceremony was ended, all present were crammed like tur-

keys, not indeed with Indian corn, but with all kinds of confectionery. To refuse the heaps of things that were forced upon one was not to be thought of, to eat them all was still more impracticable. Before I could help myself, my lap was filled with these clammy delicacies, that glued my five fingers together. Some dogs that were present, unseen, but not unheard, for they were continually under the feet of one or other of the fat Jews, and kept up a perpetual howling, even in the most solemn moments of the ceremony, relieved me from my sweet burthen; and the task of picking our way back to the hotel through the dirty streets of Tunis, seemed a heavenly delight after the misery of attending an Italiano-Moorish-Jewish wedding.

How refreshing, after such torment, was a gallop over the wide plain, and how gladly did I give the reins to my dapple-grey, and breast the wind as he flew along beneath me. In a trice we had reached the Bardo, and were just taking counsel whither we should next direct our course, when an officer of high rank, with a brilliant decoration, rode by and saluted us. We are in Tunis, you know, therefore do not be surprised when I say that the salute emboldened me to accost the polite stranger, and beg that he would oblige us foreigners by suggesting to us a pretty ride. He immediately offered himself for our guide, and proposed that we should go to the handsomest gardens in Manobah, those of Sidi Mus-

tafa Sahab-el-Taba, grand keeper of the seals, and brother-in-law of the Bey. From the elegant French pronunciation of our new friend I immediately recognised him for a Pole; and having been commissioned in Bona, by Colonel K——, to present his compliments to Colonel Szczepanowski, a Pole of high rank in the Bey's service, something whispered to me that this was the very man. Accordingly I came out very boldly with K——'s message, and thereby insured to myself the acquaintance of Colonel Szczepanowski, for it was himself.

We dismounted at Sabab-el-Taba's gardens, and although the Pasha himself was there, we were permitted to enter at the Colonel's request. The grounds are delightfully laid out and admirably kept; I could almost fancy I was in Italy as I strolled about beneath the thick foliage of the oranges and lemons. Not one plant or flower could I discover which I had not already seen in one of the best Italian villas. Colonel Szczepanowsky took us also through many charming tracts of scenery, and was pleased at the delight they afforded us. All the productions of nature, as he justly remarked, are as beautiful in this country as the works of man are detestable. He looked on Tunis as his home, having been settled there many years as colonel in the Bey's cavalry. Having business at the country house of one of the Pacha's, he could not accompany us to Tunis, but he pointed out

to us a route to the city from which we had a very fine and extensive view, comprising Tunis, the two lakes, el Merse, La Goletta, Fort St. Louis, the Casbah, and many other points that contributed to adorn the landscape.

XXII.

Excursion to the site of Carthage—An eclipse of the moon.

March 18th.

YESTERDAY the weather was again so fine as to make us forget many of its horrid predecessors; and we resolved to employ it in spending as much time as possible among the ruins of Carthage, and visiting Lady Reade on our way. With this intention we were in our saddles very early, but we lost ourselves so completely in a labyrinth of cactus-hedged lanes, that we neither knew where we were, nor whither we should direct our course; so charming however was the region through which we passed, that during the first hour at least we were quite reconciled to our erratic course, for our ride was unquestionably the best we have yet enjoyed in the neighbourhood of Tunis. What exquisite groups of palms overshadowing some snow-white marabou surprised us at every turn; what luxuriant vegetation

delighted our eyes on all sides; olives, carob, and almond-trees, shining amid the delicate tints of their newly expanded foliage; castor-plants and fennel, that reached as high as my head, though I sat on horseback. We were in no desert either, for Moorish villas peeped in every direction through the foliage, and we often heard voices behind the hedges; but it was quite out of our power to inquire our way. In vain did I try to apply the two Arabic words taught me by our good friend Captain Levrat—*allimin* and *allisar*—no one understood or chose to understand me. So we gave the reins to our steeds to see if perchance they should find the lost road, but they carried us to a deserted fondack or Arab coffee-house, and that did not much mend the matter. The result of our wandering was, that we arrived at Lady Reade's at three o'clock instead of twelve; were of course obliged to give up Carthage altogether, and could only remain half-an-hour in Abdellia, as otherwise we should have found the gates of Tunis closed against us. The air was as warm as with us in August; not a breath of wind was stirring, and the sun gleamed with truly African intensity. We were quite exhausted when we reached our hotel at nightfall; but the loss of our way had made us acquainted with so charming a country, that we never for a moment regretted the frustration of our plan.

XXIII.

Sidi Hamda's harem—Bassa Mamlick—Yussuf.

March 19th.

I SHOULD never have imagined that in Africa, the native land of the finest horses, a lady must learn to ride with spurs, if she entertained the very natural desire to make her horse move on, and yet I have this day experienced the fact. The lovely weather allured us this morning to fulfil a long-cherished intention of spending as many hours as possible among the ruins of Carthage. In consequence of our strict orders to have the horses ready at six o'clock, we had them actually at half-past eight, and we were already mounted at that unusually early hour—mounted I say, but that was all. I rode, for the first time, a very good black horse, which however was cunning enough to perceive that I had no spurs, and consequently he would not stir from the spot. The eighteen miles to Carthage were no inconsiderable ride, and I had no choice left but to abandon my intention of reaching it, or to return home and buckle on the spur, of which Mr. Roland had made me a present. I chose the latter course, and though I scarcely touched my Arab with the cruel weapon, yet

the mere consciousness that I possessed it had a magic effect upon him, and I could scarcely have anticipated the immediate change wrought in him; from the laziest and most obstinate of brutes, he was transformed into the liveliest and most willing. I was so much afraid of hurting the poor creature, that I kept my heel turned outwards in a most cramped position; but I soon got used to this, and we passed a delightful day in the enjoyment of the exquisite landscape that no longer seemed strange to us.

After we had long contemplated the ground on which had stood the whilom mistress of the seas, we returned back, saw the magnificent sunset casting its violet light over the broad environs of Tunis, and entered the gate as night was falling. It was full moon, and little dreaming what a trick the queen of night was preparing for us, we admired her lovely silver light that contrasted so enchantingly with the blue heavens.

After spending the whole day in the open air on foot and on horseback, one is not much disposed to go into company in the evening. But it was Sunday, the French Consul's evening for reception; we had never complied with his frequent invitation to attend his soirée, and so it was resolved by our triumvirate that we should spend the evening with M. Lagau. With this intention I was just proceeding to change my dress, not in my dressing-room, but behind my tottering screen, when I was attracted to the gallery

by several loud voices, all talking together in the court-yard. The people in this country are always on the watch for anything that may interest us Europeans, and an interesting thing it certainly was that occasioned the loud shouting under our windows. The shouts grew every moment louder and more frequent; all the officers and other inmates of the hotel had hurried from the dining-room to the roof, and whilst we ourselves were making our way thither, we heard no end of musket shots in all directions. A very fine eclipse of the moon, by which the bright luminary was reduced to a small blood-red crescent, was the cause of all this uproar. Not only did the shots fall thicker and faster, but the whole town was in a state of the most desperate commotion, as though the direst enemy was at the gates. More than half the population were on the house-tops, partly to observe the phenomenon, partly to shoot the dragon dead that threatened to devour the moon. From the tops of all the minarets the muezzins summoned the Believers to prayer in that awful crisis; large processions were made in all haste to every mosque, to appease the wrath of the Prophet by prayer and implore him to save the moon from the destroying dragon, and shots were fired from all the roofs as fast as all the muskets could be loaded, in the firm belief that the dragon which wanted to swallow the moon, could be hit by a lucky ball at a distance of some two hundred and fifty thousand miles. It almost

seemed as though we were in a town rent within by the most terrible civil war and assailed by unmerciful foes from without.

This event made us late in our visit to the Consul, for instead of shooting at the moon, some of the Moors might have been tempted to take a more successful aim at the Europeans wending their way with lanterns through the dark streets. However, as the residence of the French Consul was not far from our hotel, we at last accomplished the hazardous passage thither in safety. M. Lagau's guests seemed not in the least to wonder at the ridiculous conduct of the Moors. A residence of twenty years among such a people may well blunt one's perceptions of their childish oddities. The party at M. Lagau's consisted chiefly of French. His daughter fully deserves the favourable mention we had heard of her. She is an exceedingly agreeable girl, uniting with the most winning exterior, the advantages of considerable musical talent and a knowledge of several languages. She possesses a treasure very rare in Tunis, namely, an excellent piano on which she performed several difficult pieces with great ability.

March 21st.

For once in my life, the reality has not deceived my expectations, but on the contrary, far surpassed them. I can now quit Tunis with the satisfaction of knowing that there still exists a trace of that world of the East, which was impressed on our imaginations in childhood, by the wondrous tales of the inexhaustible Sheherazade. I am still dizzy from the intellectual intoxication I have recently undergone, through beholding the actual presentment of a rich portion of the "Thousand and One Nights," and know not whether I am capable in this state of giving even a faint picture of what I have seen.

I have already mentioned that the reigning Bey, Achmet, forms a singular exception among oriental princes, since he contents himself with one wife, and keeps no harem. In this respect he is the very opposite to his cousin, the Bey of the Camp. Achmet having no issue, his cousin, Sidi Hamda, is heir presumptive to the throne. Not only on this account, but also for his personal qualities, his jovial disposition and love of splendour, he is a great favourite with the people who recognise in him the genuine oriental

character. His unusually large harem teems with all the gorgeous luxury of the olden time. At the same time, Sidi Hamda is a progressist in his way; he does not shut his eyes to the advances which have been gradually taking place of late years, since there has been a closer intercourse with Europe, and which, it is to be hoped, will, ere long, soften the manners of the East. In short, no one ever talks of Achmet Bey, while the name of the Bey of the Camp is in every man's mouth; and as my curiosity to see his harem was very great, Mr. Davis was so good as to beg permission of Sidi Hamda, with whom he is intimately acquainted, for Mrs. Davis, and some other ladies, of whom I was one, to visit his wives on an appointed day.

I was rather afraid this morning that the storm of the last evening would have frustrated our project, but at the first peep from my window, I was reassured by the appearance of a fine blue, cloudless, sky. The heavy rain, however, had made the condition of the streets very unpleasant for us, who had no choice but to go on foot to Mrs. Davis, where the whole party assembled of course *en grande tenue*. At nine o'clock we all set out in several carriages for the Bardo, Mrs. Davis's carriage, in which her daughter-in-law and myself accompanied her, leading the way. Eagerly conversing about what we were going to see, and how we should deport ourselves towards the princesses, we had soon reached our destination. After entering

the gate of the Bardo, one passes along an elegant street, lined with two rows of shops. Large as this residence appears when seen from without, still I had not expected, on entering it, to behold a second Tunis; and really it was little short of that, for it was almost as full of bazars, markets, and throngs of men and cattle.

Driving along the main street, we reached a large quadrangular court, where we alighted. Horses in trappings of velvet, gold, and silver, waiting their owners' return; groups of slaves, soldiers, camels, guests, and visitors enlivened the place. On the right hand side, opposite the stables, is the entrance to the harem, to which we were conducted. A well-guarded door opened to admit us, and the instant the last lady of our party had crossed its threshold, the door was slammed to, and a loud clatter of bolts, bars, and chains grated unpleasantly on my ear, and gave plain token that we were in the *sanctum sanctorum* into which no men were admitted. We now walked through some passages filled with female slaves, but the darkness was so great that I could distinguish only the whites of their eyes and their teeth. Presently we found ourselves in the Patio, a court-yard in the interior of the mansion.

Here I thought myself transported into an enchanted palace like that which the genius of the lamp built for Aladdin, to receive the Princess Badrulbudur. My head swam, and I knew not where to fix my

bewildered gaze. Fain would I have dwelt upon the first fairy-like impression, but my companions made me hurry on with them to pay our respects to the favourite princess, Lillah. My friend Mlle. d'H—— had remained behind with me, and she shared my mute delight and admiration. The symmetry and pure Moorish style of the Patio were perfect. All round it were ranges of slender graceful pillars, supporting an upper story gaily painted, almost in the Chinese fashion. The pavement of the Patio, and the cool gushing fountain in its midst, were of dazzling white polished marble. Under all the four colonnades were several openings leading to the inner apartments of the women. I cannot better describe the play of colours in the costume of the inmates of this bright and airy prison, than by comparing it to the variegated plumage of the hundreds of curious birds here assembled. Proud strutting peacocks, cockatoos, parrots of all kinds, and a multitude of other Oriental birds of species wholly unknown to me, screamed, flew, and stalked about, as companions to the poor women whose perpetual imprisonment they were to enliven and adorn. Several negresses were here and there busy in polishing the mirror-like marble steps of the Patio, over which elsewhere were heard pattering the gold and jewel-laden slippers of one of the Princesses. Through every door were seen quite fairy glimpses; at every pillar were groups of fantastically-dressed women, the monotony of whose

daily life was broken by the visit of the strangers. Gorgeously dressed children were led and carried about by numerous nurses and attendants. Nothing was to be heard but the rustling of silks, and mutterings and whisperings that meant of course: Who comes here to peep into our golden cage?

But, as I have said, all the other ladies except Mlle. d'H. had hastened forwards, and were calling to me from the entrance of Lillah's state room to follow them. The transition from the broad light of the Patio into the large room, lighted only by the doorway, was so sudden, that at first I could not see at all, and I was standing in front of Lillah without in the least suspecting it. The rich carpets on which I trod, the drowsy atmosphere laden with the finest perfumes of Arabia, and the countless figures, clad in gay, fantastic garments, that surrounded me, all strengthened the illusion that I was present in an actual scene from the thousand and one nights. Lillah took me by the hand and led me up to the handsome divan, which was raised two steps, and furnished with soft cushions covered with yellow damask. Then she made me a sign to sit down beside her, which of course I did, though by no means with the same ease as herself, since the very low divan was made to be sat on with crossed and bended legs. Whilst my eyes were gradually accustoming themselves to the darkness of the spacious room, I bent them upon my neighbour, the queen of this sumptuous harem. Lillah is a well-preserved

woman of five-and-thirty, or from that to forty. Three of her grown up daughters were present and conversed with the other ladies of our party, as well as they could, by means of signs. We had for interpreter Mlle. d'H's. cousin, a lad about ten years old, who was still privileged, by virtue of his tender years, to enter the jealous doors of the harem; not only, however, did he often refuse to interpret to the ladies all the questions which our curiosity suggested, but he was so fondled and petted by them that he was all but useless to us.

But to return to the harem queen. Her figure may, perhaps, have been handsome, but it is now spoiled by excessive corpulence, which, however, according to the Moorish canons of beauty, only serves to heighten her charms. Her dress was very simple. Her upper garment was only a loose, shapeless kind of caftan, of bright rose coloured levantine silk, fastened at the throat by a splendid diamond clasp, and reaching only to the knees. Under it she wore a jacket thickly embroidered with gold; her richly brocaded trowsers were fastened from the knees to the ankles like leggings. Her bare feet were fattened out of all symmetry. Several female slaves waited behind her with various kinds of slippers.

All the two hundred women in the harem, with the exception of the negresses, were dressed in bright coloured silks, and Lillah was only distinguished from the rest by her incomparably beautiful jewels, and by

the universal deference shown towards her. Anything finer than Lillah's diamonds and other jewels I never saw. On her right thumb she wore a splendid ring, with the Bey's cypher in diamonds, and on the third and fourth fingers of both hands she had rings, one pair of which was set with emeralds, and each of the others with five or six *diamans-monstres*. On her right arm she wore three rows of fine pearls, each of which was as large as the tip of my little finger. I was not a little astonished to see several rows of the commonest glass beads in such costly company.

Her head-dress was very simple, apart from the immense value of the jewels attached to it. All the Moorish women I had hitherto seen wore their hair combed smooth backwards, in the fashion we call *à la chinoise;* but Lillah's hair, the incipient greyness of which had been changed to brown by artificial means, hung down her cheeks in bands as broad as a finger, and was cut off below. The hair of the back of her head was tied up in a white silk kerchief, two long ends of which, worked with gold, hung down her back, whilst the other two stood upright on the crown of her head like horns. All the other women had head dresses of the same curious form; and Lillah moreover wore pendent from the back of her head a great lot of amulets of every shape and size. Not to weary the reader with details of the costly things I saw, I will only mention, that a ring with a *solitaire*, worn by one of Lillah's daughters, has been valued in Paris at a hundred and twenty thousand francs.

Lillah is the daughter of an Italian woman, who was sold to a very rich Moor, who married her. The offspring of that marriage has been deemed worthy to become the favourite wife of the Bey of the Camp, and her son will hereafter inherit the throne. Having been told that Lillah spoke Italian, I spoke to her in that language, but she made signs to me that she had quite forgotten it, I afterwards learned that was not the case, but that she pretended as much in order to please her husband.

After I had sat by her side for a while, I examined the decorations of the room more closely. It was arched and of the same oblong form as all the Moorish rooms I had yet seen; but its proportions were colossal, and well calculated to display the gorgeous wealth it contained. The walls were hung with the heaviest pomegranate velvet, figured richly in gold and satin. The ceiling exhibited a tasteful mosaic of mother-of-pearl and other costly substances. Countless weapons, long single-barrelled guns, yataghans, pistols, sabres, &c., adorned with gold, silver, and jewels, and lying for shew in their half-opened velvet and gold cases, were arranged symmetrically all along the walls, except where a kind of bracket presented other rarities to view, consisting of vases, crystals, porcelain, mother-of-pearl boxes, &c., &c., in short, a selection of the handsomest objects, some from the southern extremities of Africa, some from the first *ateliers* of Paris and London, and sent as presents to adorn this female prison. Eleven handsome mirrors in heavy *rococo*

frames, multiplied the magnificence of the apartment, and four Parisian *chaises longues* shewed that our modern inventions are not quite unknown in the life of the harem. Life, did I say? Can the hot-house vegetation of these poor creatures b e so called? The seventeen large clocks I counted in the one room plainly told how heavy time hung on their hands. Do the unfortunate beings imagine that seventeen clocks can hasten the lagging flight of time for them more than one?

I was now obliged to sit down again beside Lillah and suffer her to scrutinize my person. What most attracted her attention was my eye glass, and a small plain garnet bracelet, which she tried several times to put on. I gave her to understand she might keep it; but when she found it would not half go round her own arm, or her daughter's, she gave it back to me with an air of commiseration. Lillah now bethought her of offering us refreshments, and, calling one of her attendant slave girls, she handed her an enormous bunch of keys, not putting them directly into her hand, which would have been doing the girl too great an honour, but laying them on an embroidered cushion which the slave held to receive them. Refreshments were now set before us, but they were all sweet, and strongly flavoured with musk and essence of roses. A delicious gold coloured beverage met with our unanimous approbation; it must be prepared from a species of fruit wholly unknown to us.

Lillah's nails and hands were dyed with henna, like those of all Moorish women, and her eyelids and eyebrows were tinged with a black powder. I gave her to understand, through our young interpreter, that I wished to know how the colouring was effected, whereupon she sent one of her women to fetch the little apparatus containing the indispensable materials. Finding that I was to be made acquainted with the cosmetic, not only by sight but by personal trial, I asked why I, of all our party, was especially chosen for that honour. Her answer was: "You are not yet married, I am sure; but if I paint your eyes you will very soon get a handsome husband." To this I could only reply that I was married, but that nevertheless the honour of having my face painted by so fair a princess was most welcome to me under any circumstances. I now submitted to the beautifying process, but perhaps I did not sit for it as coolly as I should have done, for when Lillah had finished, her daughters expressed the strongest disapprobation of her performance. So much the worse was it for me.

Incidit in Scyllam qui vult vitare Charybdin.

Scarcely had I begun to congratulate myself on having escaped from Lillah, who had twenty times been near putting out my eye with her sharp pencil, ere I fell into the hands of her daughter, who, without more ado, fell to rubbing my face all

over with her handkerchief, which she moistened with her spittle. The powder used for darkening the eyelashes is black lead. It is kept in a little flask of horn, or even of precious metal, to which is fitted a wooden pencil, that after being blackened with the powder, is drawn along between the lids. Some dexterity is necessary to perform this operation successfully, and without causing pain. The practice was known to the Greeks and Romans. Pencils and powder, just like those used in the present day, have been found in the tombs of Egyptian women in the catacombs of Sahara.

Among the objects that greatly struck me in this abode of luxury, I must mention the ladies' pocket handkerchiefs. What will the reader think, when I say that a head like Lillah's, loaded with some forty thousand pounds' worth at least of jewels, coquetted with a dark cotton handkerchief, such as might be worn by a labouring man in England?

Lillah now proposed a walk through her other apartments, and I gladly allowed her to take me by the arm and lead me through a labyrinth of dark, narrow, but fragrant passages, that led to a wide gallery covered with glass and flanked by a charming garden. We were followed by all the other ladies of our party, and by more than half those of the harem. Though slavery is said to be abolished in the Tunisian territory, the fact is not so within the Bardo, whatever may be the case beyond its precincts;

for scarcely could the harem queen move two steps without several female slaves falling at her feet, and soliciting the honour of kissing the hem of her garment. Forced as the comparison may seem, the sight reminded me of the defiling before the Pope, when every individual present kneels to receive the holy father's blessing and to kiss his shoe. A very wide divan, which served as a bed by night for some of the women, ran the whole length of the gallery and occupied a full third of its breadth. I remarked here, with some surprise, a handsome lathe, which seemed to have been quite recently used. Its appearance in such a place was explained, when one of the ladies showed me a finely-turned coffee service in ivory, and told me that it was the handiwork of the Bey, who is very expert in such matters; and I could not but own that his Highness had shown great taste in selecting the handsomest part of his harem for his workshop.

The news of our visit had by this time reached the ears of Sidi Hamda, and not only had we the honour to see the Bey of the Camp appear suddenly amongst us, but we were attended by two of his brothers and by one of his officers, who was shortly to marry one of his daughters. Upon the Bey's entrance, Lillah advanced to meet him; he pressed her affectionately in his arms and kissed her lips; her two brothers-in-law also saluted her, but they kissed her respectfully on the forehead. The friendliest

feeling seemed also to exist between the Bey and his two sisters, who resided in the harem; and after seeing so much apparent cordiality and love mutually manifested by them, I cannot put any faith in the commonly received assertion, that among the Moors it is not allowable for brothers and sisters to see each other after a certain age.

Sidi Hamda is said to be distinguished among his compeers for suavity and good-nature; his harem is therefore treated more indulgently than was ever the custom under any of his ancestors, and cannot of course be considered as a standard specimen of the Oriental harem.

The Bey of the Camp is a handsome man in the prime of life, and his frank and pleasing features fully correspond with the good qualities attributed to him by common fame. He dresses very simply, and had I met him for the first time in the street, I should not have been able to distinguish him from any other opulent Moor. He wore a white and brown striped turban, that well became his well-formed head, a jacket of reddish brown cloth, wide breeches, fastened above the knee, and white stockings.

The handsome gallery in which the Bey and his brother surprised us led to a room, one whole side of which, formed by a few pillars, lay open to a garden. It was the richest chamber in this temple of refined splendour. In the middle was a beautiful white marble basin, where shoals of gold and silver

fish disported themselves, whilst jets of water, shooting up in the most graceful forms, kept in perennial freshness the pretty creepers that blossomed round the margin. Birds of gay plumage twittered in gilt cages, musical-boxes of Parisian and Geneva manufacture performed the newest opera tunes, and the choicest odours of Arabia intoxicated the senses. On one of the walls I saw, to my great surprise, a very tolerably executed portrait in oil of Sidi Hamda. On either side of it, and on the other walls, hung several handsome mezzotints by Schopius, and copper-plate engravings of Horace Vernet's fine Eastern pieces, the originals of which I had myself beheld, and which therefore possessed peculiar charms for me. I should never have done were I to enumerate all the objects that struck me in this fairy place.

We next entered a room where I really fancied myself transported into some great *magazin de galanteries,* such as Manini's in Milan. There was no end of tables covered with nick-nacks of all sorts; and what was my astonishment to discover amongst them a small upright piano. It was quite out of tune, and some of its keys gave no sound at all; nevertheless as all women seem to delight in music, I did not wait for much pressing, and I played them piece after piece; for having once began I found it no easy thing to leave off. Lillah then begged I would sing something, and with sore ex-

ertion to my lungs I warbled *tant bien que mal*, a couple of Spanish airs, half-choked as I was in the oppressive atmosphere, and pressed upon by a circle of a hundred (and) odd ladies. When I had finished, I felt a light tap on my shoulder, and turning round I saw my gallant host, Sidi Hamda, with a bouquet in his hand, which he presented to me, and which I accepted as well as his invitation to walk with him about the garden.

The Bey of the Camp was exceedingly courteous in all his demeanour, and being able to speak a few words of Italian, he gave me to understand how much he and his wife felt honoured by our presence, and how glad they would be to receive us frequently. Our visit had now lasted some hours, and willingly as we would have remained, it was time to think of taking leave. Coffee and other refreshments were set before us in the room where the piano stood; the Bey and his brothers withdrew, and Lillah completed her duties as an obliging hostess, by taking us to see the baths, the large refectory, and her own bed-chamber. In the bath-room I saw nothing but the white marble pavement, and had like to be smothered by the hot vapour. In the refectory there was only a number of women, of subordinate rank in the household, one of whom was doing crotchet-work, and the others were making the kinds of bands used by the Moorish women for fastening their trowsers.

The bed-chamber is unquestionably one of the most sumptuous rooms in the harem. The bed, on which I reckoned no fewer than sixteen cushions, of all sizes, and covered with a great variety of stuffs, is only a very wide divan. I felt really oppressed by the obscurity of this gorgeous apartment, which received light only through an opening, before which there is a thick damask curtain instead of a door. Such a mysterious twilight, no doubt, imparts a certain charm to the boudoir; but darkness, methinks, is so true an emblem of imprisonment, that I could not be comfortable even in Lillah's musk and amber-scented *sanctum sanctorum*.

I fear our protracted visit may have seemed as tedious to poor Lillah as the account of it appears to myself. We had actually spent four hours in gazing and wonderment among these women, and hence it may, perhaps, be expected of me, that I should relate very clearly all I saw. Alas, it is not so. The more I see, the more convinced I am that to see well is a peculiar art—an art in which, as well as in all others, I am still but a beginner.

Need I describe the melancholy feelings with which I left this abode of luxury, and in all probability, of corroding grief? No one, I trust, will suppose that I contemplated only with light curiosity all that fleeting splendour, that miserable exchange for life's best treasure—freedom. To me it seems

that the Prisoner of Chillon's dungeon were preferable to the richest apartment in the gorgeous harem. Were I a fettered slave, I would rather see my captivity in its naked truth; but, fortunately for themselves, the tame inmates of the harem have no such refractory sentiments. These poor creatures possess in their entire ignorance a protection against afflictions which would be utterly intolerable for us freedom-loving Europeans.

Before we stepped into our carriage, Mrs. Davis proposed to us a visit to Bassa Mamluk, one of the Bey's ministers. We drove to his house, and were not a little surprised when we found ourselves by the bedside of a sick, if not a dying man. The Moors must set great store by the visits of Europeans, since they do not decline them under such circumstances. How widely are their habits, in this respect, at variance with ours. Imagine the aged father of a family, almost with the death rattles in his throat, receiving the visit of several strange ladies! After the gorgeous luxury with which our eyes had been satiated all the morning, we had little attention to bestow on the Bassa Mamluk's mansion, though it was really handsome; but there was one object in it, which to me was far more interesting than all we had seen at Sidi Hamda's. I have said little of the beauty of the latter's women, because I did not see one among them of striking personal charms; but I cannot be silent as to the wife of the Bassa Mamluk,

for her whole appearance struck me with such admiration at the first glance, that my eyes were riveted upon her in mute delight, and I could only ejaculate from time to time, with Mademoiselle d'H—— "Quelle parfaite beauté! Quelle noble créature!"

The Bassa Mamluk is a white-headed old man, and his wife's remarkable beauty does not consist in the youthful freshness of her features. Her age might be from forty to forty-five; and besides this, her lovely countenance wore manifest traces of long night watching and corroding anxiety for her sick husband. No jewel adorned the head or arms of this beautiful woman, it being her country's custom to indicate deep sorrow by laying aside every ornament. A plain garment, falling in voluminous folds, enveloped her majestic form, and reminded me of many of the finest antique statues. Her anxious gaze seemed to hang on every breath drawn by the old man, whose faint head and ghastly face, white as his snowy beard, rested heavily in the arms of his adult son.

Anything more classically beautiful than the features and whole deportment of this noble woman, it would really be impossible to conceive. As a proof that I do not exaggerate, I may mention that, having met the French Consul this afternoon, I asked him had he ever heard of the marvellously beautiful wife of the Bassa Mamluke. "Oh, yes," he replied, "she

is the famous beauty who turned young Yussuff's head, and on whose account he was obliged to fly, his amour with her having been discovered."

This Yussuf, now a renowned general in the French service—so the consul informed me—is by birth a Frenchman, whose father, M. Tesser, was head of the police in the island of Elba, in Napoleon's time. At Leghorn, where he had been put to school by his father, young Louis Yussuf stole out one day with some of his companions and went to a *café*, where they were invited by some Tunisian sailors to go and see their ship which lay in the port. The boys accepted the invitation, and whilst they were entertained with sweetmeats the ship was got under weigh, and they were carried to Tunis, when they became the property of the Bey. Yussuf received the complete education of a Mamluke, and found so much pleasure in his military exercises, fine horses, clothes, and accoutrements, that all longing for home became extinguished in him. He was compelled, however, to fly from Tunis in consequence of the discovery of an amorous intrigue he carried on with one of the women of the then reigning Bey, now the beautiful wife of the Bassa Mamluke. He had a narrow escape from death, having been concealed for three whole hours in a large clock-case, after which he got on board a French war-steamer, which conveyed him to Algiers. There he entered the French service, and distinguished himself in the battle of Mahdia, which

led to his being sent to Tunis, under the protection of the French flag, to enter into negotiation with the government. On his return he took possession of Bona, after repulsing an Arab tribe that had invested it for the sake of plunder. By this *coup de main* a hundred and fifteen pieces of cannon fell into the hands of the French. Yussuf received the cross of the Legion of Honour, and was soon after made colonel, and put at the head of a body of national auxiliaries.

But it strikes me that the adventures of General Yussuf form too long an episode in the account of our visit to Bassa Mamluke. We sat by the sick-bed of the old man, who, notwithstanding his alarming condition, affably held out to us all his withered, emaciated hand, and would not let us go until we had taken coffee. After a short stay we took leave of him and his incomparably beautiful wife, whose personal appearance made a far deeper impression upon me than all I had seen in the magically brilliant harem of the Bey.

On our way back to the town we were met by F—— on horseback. "What in the name of heaven have they been doing to you?" he cried, on seeing my face unmercifully smeared with black lead. "But where is Saetta?" I asked him in return, on perceiving that my favourite was not with him. "Oh," replied F——, "I have been riding about this hour and more in search of her; for, after passing through

the gate, I set off at a gallop; Saetta, I suppose, was not able to keep up with me, and when I slackened my pace, and looked round, she was not to be seen." If the reader knew how fond I am of the animal, he might easily conceive the grief this intelligence caused me. To lose a faithful dog in any town is a sad thing, but in Tunis, where it once happened to a stranger to see offered for sale, as a stuffed specimen of natural history, the poodle he had lost a few days before;—in Tunis, where there is a negro race from the south of Africa, who are particularly found of dog's flesh, and immediately slaughter and eat all the dogs they lay their hands on;—in Tunis, where there are hundreds of harems, where Saetta would remain a prisoner for life, if one of the fair inmates had once taken a fancy to her;—in Tunis, where there are Moorish quarters never yet explored by European, and out of the mazes of which our little four footed Italian could hardly find his way;—in short, to lose the dog in Tunis was a thing that grieved me sorely, and the possibility of recovering our lost favourite seemed to me so improbable, that I gave her up for lost altogether. Nevertheless, we gave notice of our loss to all the consulates, sent out messengers in all directions, and ourselves wandered about, on foot, on horseback, and in carriages. It was soon known to the greedy Jews, Arabs, Bedouins, and Moors, that sundry piasters were to be made out of us in consequence of this occurrence,

and they were of opinion that so favourable an opportunity ought not to be neglected. We had spent more than five hours in our fruitless quest, the sun was gilding with its last rays the flat roofs of Tunis, and we were about to give up our unavailing search, when word was brought us that the dog had been found. One said she was at our consul's at Abdelia, another that she had been taken to La Goletta, a third, that she was in a neighbouring house, a fourth alleged he had seen her in a Moorish quarter of the town. There was no end to the variety of reports we heard, and as we did not understand a word of all that was uttered by the rabble round us, we were quite out of patience. Only shew us the dog and you shall be handsomely rewarded, we repeated again and again to the *quasi dragomans* about us, but in vain. So we turned our steps homewards, and no sooner had we arrived at the hotel, than the Swedish consul's *dragoman* appeared, and offered to accompany F. to the Moorish quarter of the town, where Saetta was to be found in a coffee house. How impatiently did I await F's. return, and how rejoiced was I when I saw him walk in about night fall with my lost favourite. The thieves had taken her pretty silver collar, with the latin inscription, which must have been rather unintelligible to them. Confused and agitated, the recovered wanderer rests on the divan, dreaming, no doubt, of her captivity among the Moors; whilst, for my part, I joyfully exclaim:

We have got her again, and she shall neither end her days in a harem, nor as a cabinet specimen of natural history, nor as a tit bit for some negro epicure.

XXIV.

The reigning bey—his administration—Criminal justice—Abolition of slavery.

March 23rd.

YESTERDAY we were at a party at the English vice-consul's where were assembled the greater part of the European population of this place, which indeed consists of the consular families. The greater part, I say, since political opinions unfortunately break up this small European public into various fractions, and the consciousness of partaking a common exile on the African soil is not sufficient to overcome the diversity of sentiments. The relations, however, in which the consuls stand to the Bey through their respective governments, may be the chief excuse of these dissensions.

Mr. and Mrs. Davis were at the English vice-consul's yesterday evening, and as the former has spent many years in Africa, as a missionary, and in that capacity has enjoyed peculiar opportunities for profoundly scrutinizing the manners of the people and the administration of the country, his conversation was

full of interest for me. He was so obliging as to give me much information respecting the present Bey; and as I have hardly spoken yet of the latter, it may be proper that I should say something about him and his government of the country.

Musheer Achmet Bassa Bey, who has received from the Sultan of Constantinople the title of a Pacha of three tails, succeeded his uncle Mustafa, on the throne, as I have before-mentioned, on the 10th of October, 1837. His too exclusive taste for military matters occasions him to overlook the most certain means of increasing the prosperity of his dominions. The regular troops, which are a real scourge to the people, and which were raised to the number of ten thousand men by Hussein, the Bey's uncle, have been doubled by Achmet. As these troops are very badly paid, they rob and plunder to that extent, that at one time it was very dangerous to be in the streets of Tunis after sunset. So badly are they provided with all necessaries, and so miserably ill-trained, that if the Bey had a still greater number of them, he could never resist the smallest European power; whereas, a thousand well-disciplined soldiers were sufficient to keep the country in order, and the Arabs in awe.

"But how is it possible," I asked Mr. Davis, "that so fruitful a country is in a condition apparently so wretched,—a country, the soil of which needs only to be scratched with a spade, in order to yield

a copious harvest, and which was once regarded as the richest province of the Roman empire, the granary of the whole world?" "The answer is this," replied Mr. Davis; "the Arabs, indolent by nature, not only receive no encouragement in the cultivation of the land, but are actually discouraged from that pursuit. They hesitate to sow, because they know that their crop would be consumed in tithes, taxes, and government duties." An Arab told Mr. Davis that he sowed two caffis—about three bushels—of barley last year, and when the tax gatherers came, not only had they swept away his whole harvest, but he was obliged moreover, to buy half a caffis in order to make up the full rate demanded of him. "Next year," said the Arab, "I will put no seed at all in the ground, for why should I waste my strength and health on work that yields me no return."

It is clear, that if the Bey did but a little for agriculture, his realm would be one of the finest in the world, for nature has been more liberal to it than to any part of Europe. But instead of this, the Bey wastes his time as well as his means, upon his soldiers, who are like scorpions in his hand to lash his subjects. Though the pay of these troops is low, yet the total cost of maintaining them amounts to a considerable sum; hence the Bey has felt himself compelled to augment the taxes and render the crown monopolies more stringent than they had been under his predecessors. One of these monopolies, that of

tobacco, caused a rebellion among the mountaineers of Kabes. Notwithstanding all this, it would be doing the Bey injustice, in Mr. Davis's opinion, to deny him the possession of some good qualities. Under none of his predecessors have Europeans enjoyed so much security; there are many Europeans too, in the Bey's service, which is greatly to the advantage of the country. Among them the Cavalier Raffo and Monsieur Bogo are particularly distinguished. The former, who is Minister for Foreign Affairs, is said to be an able statesman, and is well known in Europe; the latter is Grand Chamberlain. Colonel Szczepanowski, whom I have before mentioned, is at the head of the Bey's cavalry, and the direction of the military musical bands is in the hands of Professor Mezger, a German.

The Turkish influence has but a nominal existence in Tunis; for, strictly speaking, Achmet Pacha is absolute ruler in his own dominions. His word is law, and law that must be fulfilled under all circumstances, as though it were uttered by the prophet himself.

Mahomet says, in the fifth chapter of the Koran: "The man or woman who thieves shall have their hand cut off as a retribution for what they have done." The law founded on this text enjoins that for the first offence the criminal shall lose his right-hand, for the second his left foot, for the third his left hand, for the fourth his right foot.

Mr. Davis told me, he had heard, on credible authority, of a case that occurred in Tunis, of a man who had such a propensity for thieving, that after having lost all his limbs for repeated commissions of the offence, he still found ways and means to steal, so that he incurred the punishment of being scourged *ab libitum*. After a criminal is condemned to lose his hand or his foot, he is marched out of court, and the operation is forthwith performed by a barber. The hand is removed at the wrist, and the foot at the ankle-joint; the stump is then dipped in hot pitch, and the culprit is put upon the back of an ass with his face to the animal's tail, and marched all over the town, an officer going before him and proclaiming the nature of his crime.

The Arabs, who are condemned to death, are usually hanged, seldom beheaded; the Turks enjoy the privilege, as they deem it, of being strangled. The Jews are executed in the same way as the Arabs. Women of the lower classes are thrown into the water, those of the higher ranks are poisoned. Military culprits are now shot, an innovation that gives great displeasure to the Mohammedans, since that mode of putting to death is not sanctioned by any passage in the Koran. Murder is capitally punished, but with some exceptions; for instance, if a Mohammedan slave kills a free unbeliever, he is not put to death for the deed.

The punishment which is most frequently inflicted

under the present Bey is the bastinado; the number of blows administered to one poor wretch is sometimes from four hundred to a thousand. Many die from the effects of this tremendous chastisement. The culprit is laid on his back with his hands tied, and to prevent his moving, an officer sits on his head and another on each of his legs. His feet are passed through two holes in a board, and if the poor wretch attempts to budge ever so little, the rope with which he is bound is drawn tighter. Two executioners, armed with sticks, then deal out the appointed number of blows on his feet with all their might.

Mr. Davis conversed with me also on the abolition of slavery, which notwithstanding what I have said of the apparent continuance of this usage in the harem, has actually been effected of late in the Tunisian regency. This so-called advance in civilization is due solely to the exertions of our Consul, Sir Thomas Reade. He kept himself on the watch for a favourable moment to effect something for the emancipation of the Tunisian slave population, and in 1843, he succeeded in accomplishing his noble design. In that year, it happened that an unfortunate slave sought, and of course obtained, refuge with Sir Thomas Reade from his master's cruel treatment. Our Consul thought that the opportunity he had long sought was now come, and on the next day he waited on the Bey at the Bardo,

where in the course of a long audience he pleaded his cause with so much eloquence, that the Bey consented forthwith to give his own slaves their freedom, to put an end to the import and export of slaves, and to make all his subjects follow his own example.

This was no light measure, since the amount of property represented by the possession of slaves was very considerable, and its annihilation was severely felt by many. That our Consul should have used his influence with the Bey to so humane an end is highly praiseworthy; but since I have been in the East, and have been enabled more closely and accurately to appreciate the relationship of master and slave, both in Asia and Africa, and the treatment the one receives from the other, my views as to the philanthropy of the abolition of slavery have been in a certain degree changed; and though I freely admit that there are cases in which the treatment endured by the slave is most atrocious, still I cannot help thinking that the negro race is far happier in slavery than it could be in a state of freedom under existing circumstances. It is a notion imbibed in Europe with our mother's milk, but a very false notion for all that, that the condition of the slave is an unhappy one. How this may be in the various remote colonies, I am not competent to say; but what I have seen and heard of slavery in Constantinople and in Africa, has com-

pletely effaced from my mind the idea of unutterable cruelty which is usually associated with it in Europe.

XXV.

A fête champêtre—Hamamlif—A Bedouin camp—The lululu.

March 25th.

YESTERDAY, in spite of all imaginable tricks, shufflings and impediments, thrown in our way by the Maltese, we contrived to spend a delightful day in genuine African style. Our plan was as follows: early in the morning Mr. Lindon was to ride out to his farm—which is about half-way to Hamamlif, have a couple of tents pitched there, and make every thing else ready for our reception. We were to follow him some hours later, and to make an excursion with him from the farm to Hamamlif; and on our return thence, the rest of the day was to be occupied by a genuine Arab repast under the tent, and a closer inspection of the surrounding tribes. We all anticipated much pleasure from this arrangement, and I had been half-an-hour watching for the horses we had ordered on the preceding evening, when F—— walked into the room and petrified me with the assurance that I might take off my riding dress,

for our horses were all gone to the Bardo, where there was an entertainment, and we should not get any. Mr. Roland's Maltese servant confirmed this intelligence, only with the difference, that he was of opinion, that his countrymen would never hire us horses again, because we rode much too fast. What was to be done? Mr. Lindon was waiting for us with tents pitched, Arab dinner, and all his busy servants; we could not fulfil our engagement to him nor even let him know that we were prevented from doing so by the shameful bad faith of the Maltese.

It was very distressing to us to leave our amiable host to wait for us all day in vain; and so, the weather being very fine, and F—— being too good a pedestrian to think much of a walk of some ten miles, he put his gun upon his shoulder and set off on foot to Mr. Lindon. But first, it had been determined between us that I should not put off my riding gear for the present, and that T—— should make further inquiries, if by chance there was any possible issue out of our dilemma. He proceeded on his mission accordingly, but returned in about an hour with the sad intelligence that all his efforts had been fruitless, and that we must give up the party for that day. But if I thought that T—— would take his word for that fact, he was mistaken. There are always horses standing for hire at the Porte de la Marine, though not of a kind to be crossed by European riders. I resolved therefore to have my saddle laid on the back of

one of these animals, and to have myself conveyed *piano piano*, step by step to Mr. Lindon's farm.

When I said that I would have my saddle laid on the back of the first hack I could find, I used the very expression most appropriate to the occasion, for girthing was out of the question, since my girths would have gone round three such skeletons. My saddle was really kept in its place only by an ingenious system of geometrically calculated balancings. But one glance at T——'s position was enough to fill me with complacent pride in the superior figure cut by myself and my Arab. My unfortunate companion was perched on a saddle as big as an arm-chair, below which appeared two horrid hip-bones, four spindle-like legs and a serpent-like neck; these, and all other visible parts of the miserable brute being of a bright grass-green colour, derived from the young corn on which horses are fed at this season, and on which they often roll themselves. As I looked at my attendant cavalier and his steed, I could not help calling to mind the striking description in the Taming of the Shrew: "His horse hipped with an old mothy saddle, the stirrups of no kindred; besides possessed with the glanders, and like to mose in the chine; troubled with the lampass, infected with the fashions, full of wind-galls, sped with spavins, raied with the yellows, past cure of the fives, stark spoiled with the staggers, begnawn with the bots; swayed in the back and shoulder shotten; ne'er

legged before, and with a half-checked bit, and a head-stall of sheep's leather, which, being restrained to keep him from stumbling, hath been often burst and now repaired with knots."

Whether there was any festival on foot, or whether it was that news had gone abroad that we were to ride in such a style through the town, I cannot tell; I only know that I never before saw the streets of Tunis and its suburbs so crowded. The fact was creditable to the good taste of the Tunisians, for certainly we presented a spectacle well worth looking at. Before we had gone many steps I perceived that my horse, perhaps in fufilment of some vow, was piously disposed to march a good part of the way on his knees. So taking his handsome owner by the burnouse, I gave him to understand by signs that he must not budge from my side.

We rode at first along the lake over very plashy ground, and afterwards through a broad plain of truly Oriental character, and at the end of about two hours we arrived at Mr. Lindon's tents. His excellent negro servant, Mohammed met us half-way, and led us the shortest route. What a surprising and cheerful aspect did the tents and the little duar, or Arab village present. It has, in a slight depression formed by an undulating soil, and the traveller approaching it never suspects the existence of the little colony until he reaches the hills forming the miniature valley, where there bursts at once upon

the view several tents, displaying to the spectator all the domestic economy of their inmates. Horses grazed, dogs played or lay scattered about; children, old men, and bustling women, looking animated with pleasant expectations of kuskussu, were seen in all directions; for it is always a gala for these Bedouin families when the *arfi*, the master, sets up his tent among them to spend the day. But of this more, hereafter.

Mr. Lindon was doubly rejoiced to see us when he heard with what difficulties we had had to contend. He had refreshments set before us, but said: "We have lost several hours through the tricks of the Maltese, and our excursion to Hamamlif seems almost impracticable. If, however, you have the courage to mount a good draught nag that has never been broken, and has never carried a European saddle, we may perhaps still reach Hamamlif, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour." I immediately accepted this proposal, and thought to myself, that if I learned nothing else in Africa, at least I should improve my experience in the art of horse-breaking. The strong limbs, broad back, arched and mottled neck and bright eye of my new Arab, satisfied me that we should be able to accomplish our undertaking. As the country in the direction of Hamamlif is known to few Europeans, Mr. Lindon took with him as guides, his negro servant Mohammed, and his Arab groom, Sala. The latter rode an incomparably beautiful three years old full-blooded mare,

and I knew not which to admire most, the splendid action of the noble animal, or the horsemanship of young Sala, who rode without a saddle, in his native Bedouin garb, and seemed as if grown to his seat.

Dreary and desolate is the country all the way to Hamamlif. Not a single tree or shrub is to be seen all round. On our left lay the boundless sea; rugged mountains lifted up their giant masses on our right; large and small fragments of rock that had fallen from the crests of the mountains to the ground over which we were travelling, increased the gloom of the landscape, and told, as it were—in silent mourning, of the history of past centuries. It must seem unacountable to every European that the Bey should prefer this wilderness to all his handsomest sites in the vicinity of Tunis. There is really something of the Tartar's taste in the choice of Hamamlif for a residence; but such is the instinct of almost all who have grown up in this region. They quit the towns and yearn for the life of the desert, as if animated by some obscure reminiscences of their descent. Loneliness is above all things dear to them, and they must certainly find in it some secret charm.

Half way between Mr. Lindon's farm and Hamamlif we left Rhades—the Odes of the ancients—on our left. It is a small town, situated on an inconsiderable elevation between the sea and the lake of

Tunis. Here Regulus defeated the Carthaginians in the first Punic war, and not far from it are the hills, where as Polybius remarks, Hanno so very unskilfully opposed him with his elephants.

Mr. Lindon told us, that when he was in this neighbourhood some days before, accompanied by some of his Arabs, and wanted to ride through Rhades, they dissuaded him from doing so, because the Europeans are greatly detested in the place, and any one of them who should make such an attempt, even though accompanied by Arabs, would certainly pay the penalty with his life. Now, as the distance between Rhades and Tunis is inconsiderable, and the inhabitants of the former must be aware of the advantages which the natives of Tunis derive from the presence of foreigners, I was very much surprised at what Mr. Lindon stated, and I can safely say that such information, given on such a spot, was by no means encouraging. I therefore gladly gave the reins to my Arab, which flew frantically with me like the wind over stock and stone, because he knew not what strange burthen was on his back.

Not far from Rhades we crossed the Miliana—the Catada of Ptolemy—by a bridge of five arches, which was built in the year 1749. We rode about four miles further, the country appearing still wilder and more desolate as we advanced, and nothing was to be seen of the palace of Hamamlif, though we could not be far distant from it. But suddenly, on our

ascending a projecting hill, the shapeless massive pile stood before us, as if it had been called up by magic from the bowels of the earth. Whoever closely examines this palace must admit that it is not altogether wanting in majesty, though it betrays an utter want of taste. Its architecture is simple, grave, and utterly devoid of ornament. The whole edifice is nothing but a dazzling white rectangular mass, the surface of which is broken by countless green lattices and irregular and oddly-arranged windows. Two colossal painted lions over the main door, give this palace a still more singular appearance.

The Bey having quitted Hamamlif about a fortnight, the palace was only occupied by a few slothful keepers. The great entrance door was shut fast, and it was not until we had knocked, thumped, shouted and made a considerable uproar, that we heard footsteps lazily approaching from within. Presently after, chains rattled, bolts clattered, and the gates of the enchanted castle were thrown open to let us in. But really it was not worth the trouble.

On the basement we passed through rooms adorned with black and white majolica and intended for soldiers, and then we were conducted with scrupulous exactness over all the other apartments, in which there was not a single piece of furniture, nor anything but an enormous quantity of dirt and fragments of lattice work on the majolica floor. It struck me as the most notable thing about the building, that it is

built over hot springs, and to make use of them, one must become the Bey's guest. Hamamlif means in Arabic "fountains of the nose," not because the water of the springs is salutary for that part of the face, but because an adjacent hill is thought to be shaped like a nose. After crawling through low, narrow, passages, or rather wading through them, since the hot mineral water reached up to our ankles, we arrived at the springs themselves. The vapour was so overpowering, that we all thought we should be suffocated, the temperature of the water being from 40 to 50 degrees of Reaumur. These springs are much extolled for the cure of rheumatism and other complaints; the Tunisians use them frequently in summer, and it occasionally happens that the Bey lends part of his palace to some of the consular families, that they may avail themselves of the healing waters.

To the right of Hamamlif lies Djebel Passa Resef, or Lead Mountain, from its peculiar form, one of the greatest ornaments of the country round Tunis. It is said to abound in fine veins of lead ore, but the Bey does not allow them to be worked. On the other side of Hamamlif is the Muktar mountain, where several fragments of an inferior kind of marble are found. It was in one of the gorges of this mountain that Dido yielded to the embraces of the pious Æneas. How willingly would I have lingered here to explore every nook of this interesting region.

At the end of the bay lies the little town of Soliman, which claims the stranger's attention as being inhabited only by Andalusian Moors. They retain the use of the Spanish language, are much more civilized than their African brethren, and receive us Christians with European hospitality. One of them is even said to have the key of a house which his ancestors formerly occupied in Grenada, and to show it with pride to every traveller who visits him. In this district there are whole fields of roses and jessamine, from which are distilled the essences for which Tunis is so famous. But the time at our disposal was too brief, and I hardly believe we spent so many moments in Hamamlif as I have employed in enumerating the objects worth seeing in that vicinity. The country between Hamamlif and Mr. Lindon's presented nothing that could make slow riding desirable; on the contrary, we wished to reach our tents as soon as possible, and if ever I rode fast in my life, it was then.

We got over about twelve miles in three quarters of an hour. After our gallop we all found a cool glass of Scotch ale, more to our taste than the Moorish kuskussu, which was very well prepared by one of the Bedouin women, under the superintendence of Mr. Lindon's French cook.

How often in my rides, as I passed some of the tribes, have I eagerly longed for an opportunity to enter one of their tents. At last my wish was fully

gratified, for not only were we the kings of the feast, but a whole duar stood open to my inspection. I could scarcely wait till our repast was ended, and was delighted as a child, or to speak still better, as Mr. Lindon's negro servant, Mohammed, who, like a true son of the wilderness, almost lost his wits for joy when his master gave orders to him to make preparations for a tent day. So deeply is the feeling and the love for the nomade way of life implanted in the breasts of the children of the wilderness.

One might live very comfortably indeed under such a tent as Mr. Lindon's, though under any tent, as I believe, one must become a sluggard; for the peculiarity of the light, which comes in only at the open side and from below, whilst we Europeans are accustomed to receive it from above, would unfit one for anything except squatting in a contemplative mood between asleep and awake, on the thick Turkey carpets and mats.

Mr. Lindon's handsome tent was of woven camel hair, coloured with black, brown and white stripes. Guns, yataghans, shot bags and hunting pouches, belonging to the master and his men, hung on the tent pole, and seemed in curious discrepancy with the choicely covered table, and with the prosaic chairs placed round it for the company. The air was filled with the exquisite aroma of a multitude of toffs, which the Bedouin children had gathered for us. I know no European flower which I could put in com-

parison as regards odour, with this seemingly insignificant thistle, and here in Tunis, where kind Nature seems to have created it in such abundance, in order to overpower the pestiferous exhlations of the town, I have become too fond of it not to say a few words about it.

One or two days after our arrival in Tunis, F—— brought me a very ugly flower, a sort of vegetable polypus as it were, which had neither leaves nor stalk, nor, as I supposed, smell. For want of a stalk it was stuck on the end of a small twig. Almost offended at the imputation against my taste implied by F——'s offering me so ugly a thing, I paid no attention to his present but let it lie on the chimney-piece. Often, however, as I passed the spot I perceived a delicious odour, and in vain inquired where were the concealed beds of violets or mignonette from which it proceeded. Neither F—— nor T—— could give me any information on the matter. The perfume meanwhile grew stronger and stronger every day, and with it grew my amazement at the phenomenon. It was my despised thistle which diffused its incomparable fragrance over the whole room. I found it limp and faded, lying under a heap of newspapers. I took it up, and pulled out the pointed twig that had been thrust into its tender heart, intreated its forgiveness for having so mistaken its worth, laid it into a saucer full of water, and behold, it did forgive me; for

its shrivelled florets expanded themselves again, and sent forth their fragrance more abundantly than ever. "I pardon your contumelious neglect of me," it seemed to say, "for my outward aspect is repulsive; but learn from me, that you should first try everything before you reject it, and that you cannot argue rightly from outward show to what lies within."

I have accordingly concluded a truce with the whole thistle tribe, and as the best proof I can give of this, I follow the example of the late Bey, and am never without one of these delightful toffs. It is now the season when they are in bloom, and they stretch their heads by hundreds out of the earth; for they grow so close to the ground that one must actually dig them out to get the flower entire. The exquisite perfume of this thistle is universally acknowledged, for many fragrant essences are prepared from it.

We were sitting round the table engaged in a pleasant chat, when our ears were assailed with a crescendo vociferation of a female chorus, reiterating the sounds lu lu lu lu lu. I had often heard the same cry uttered by women mourning at the graves of their kindred, and at night by gangs of bacchanal Moorish females, but I had never before been so close to the utterers. "A wedding! a wedding!" cried Mr. Lindon at once; "You must see it." And he offered me his arm to escort me to

the adjacent tents where the expected return of a newly-married couple was announced by that strange chorus. No sooner was our approach perceived by the people in the tents, than a crowd of women and children of all ages came to meet us, shouting out "Arfi, Arfi!" *i. e.* "Master, Master!" Young and old held out their hands for oranges, dates and other dainties, and not in vain, for Mr. Lindon had ordered Mahomet to treat them all to fruit and kuskussu, an order which was fulfilled with right good will. We proceeded to the Sheik's tent, where a number of vocalists were lu-lu-luing with all their might, waving their arms as if they were fanning themselves and could scarcely be made to stop for a moment on our arrival. The lu-lu-lu sounds as if it could not be produced by the unaided human voice, and yet the tongue is the only instrument in its utterance. It is supposed to be a corruption of the word Hallelujah, formed by abbreviation and repetition, and is employed in this country by the Moors as the word Allah is by the Turks. It is used in all joyful and mourning solemnities; only on occasions of the latter kind the women give it a deeper intonation, and every strophe ends with a terrible heart-rending groan. Women who are practiced in this performance are hired for this special purpose. The older of the vocalists, we saw on the present occasion, displayed extraordinary powers of execution.

I have already mentioned that I had always had a great desire to enter one of the tents; but now, when I stood before one of them, I was content with a mere peep into its interior. The demonstrations of joy at our presence, and at the expected return of the bridal pair, were by no means confined to chanting lululu. Guns and pistols were fired off incessantly; every body round us discharging his piece as fast as he could load it. It was a horrid spectacle, and the young Bedouins would by no means suffer themselves to be deprived of the pleasure of celebrating our arrival amongst them in their own fashion, however irksome it was to us.

The picture which the open side of the tent presented to us, disagreeable as it was in reality from dirt and extreme disorder, would have afforded an admirable subject for Horace Vernet's pencil. The Bedouins were ranged in a circle round a fire, over which hung a skin to serve as a kettle; one of the women was suckling her infant; another was grinding corn between two stones, just in the way in which it was done in the days of the patriarchs; a third had just come home with water from the well; a fourth was kneading bread to be baked in the ashes. It struck me that the whole burthen of the household cares rested upon the women, whilst the sheik, and other men of the tribe, loitered about at their ease. The fondness of these Bedouin women for ornaments is incredible; I did not see one amongst them, old

or young, that was not loaded with ear-rings, chains, armlets, and foot-rings; some even wore a mirror hung round their necks; and there is no tent, however poor and squalid it be, that is without a looking-glass. This is an article of furniture which should rather serve the women for the mortification of their vanity than for its gratification, for they are so ugly, that a true mirror cannot possibly flatter them.

A Bedouin woman is usually married by the time she reaches her eleventh year; at three-and-twenty she is a grandmother; at thirty she is quite faded; and as her term of life is the same as the European average, it follows that old women are much more numerous among the tents than young ones. A Bedouin woman often lives to see four or five generations of her descendants. Among the children I saw some very pretty ones, with just such faces as would have suited Murillo's pencil. The countless amulets against the influence of the evil eye which all wear suspended from their necks, prove how superstitious is this race. One must not take hold of anything belonging to them in order to look at it, or part company with them without saying to them *Salem alek—Peace be with you.*

There is little to be said in the way of special description of the interior of a Bedouin tent. That its opening shall be directed towards Mecca is the first requisite. The tents are so low that one cannot stand upright in them; and the Bedouins lay so huddled

together with their quadrupeds, that I could not unravel the confusion. I only know that the general impression it made on me was signified in the ejaculation, "Woe to the traveller who has to seek refuge from wild beasts in such society!"

They showed us all the presents intended for the bride, such as burnous, shawls, scarfs, kerchiefs, &c. The sun was within a few minutes of dipping down behind the mountains, and gladly as we would have done it, we could not await the return of the wedded pair; so we took leave of the festively-disposed Bedouins, and went back to our own tent, the unharmonious lululu falling weaker and weaker on our ears.

The horse that had carried me so cleverly to Hamamlif could not be spared from the car in which our tent, our cooking utensils, &c., were carried, and I had to mount my Rosinante again, whilst T—— bestrode his grass-green Arab. To make our ride still more disagreeable if possible, night overtook us before we reached the town-gate; fortunately, we found it open, for it would have gone hard with me to have to beg night quarters of the Bedouins. Mr. Lindon, with his usual hospitality, invited us to pass the evening at his house. After changing our toilettes we went there, and he told us that a sailing vessel had arrived in the course of the day, and brought the saddest news from France. Thus was the pleasant mood disturbed into which we had been brought by

a day so agreeably spent; and I asked myself whether, in fact, I should not do better to pitch my tent here as a Bedouin, far from mischief-teeming Europe, and forthwith set vigorously to work to learn the lululu, so that I might be able to receive all friends visiting us from Europe in a proper manner, according to the fashion of the country. But in that case, they must not stop their ears with wax like Ulysses.

XXVI.

A boating trip—The Bey's villa at Murnaghia.

March 27th.

Our days pass at present as monotonously as the purling of a brook. The conjecture of our friend the Consul that a steamer would soon arrive from Malta, appears to have been unfounded, and our captivity at last begins to be irksome, because the Maltese will no longer hire us their horses, and we are therefore confined to our cheerless room. In order, however, to obtain some fresh air in another way, I suffered myself to be persuaded to-day by F—— to make a short trip on the lake in a sailing-boat. It was a foolish scheme, for the wind was too high, and every one tried to dissuade us from our project. I was forced to acknow-

ledge that T—— showed his good sense in remaining quietly at the landing-place, and looking quite at his ease upon the dangers that threatened us, without sharing them with us. Our situation was for a long while very unpleasant, for we were quite alone with five Arabs, who did not understand a syllable of Italian; and when they attempted to shift the sail in order to return to port, they lost it entirely out of their hands. The boat lay sometimes on the one side, sometimes on the other, for the wind blew as it were from all quarters; the waves too dashed plentifully into the boat, and we were on the point of being compelled to have recourse to swimming. In this dilemma, F——'s nautical skill, and his high station as captain of the rowing-club in Hamburg, was of no avail to us, for the stupid boatmen could not understand him. We were but a few hundred yards distant from the island of Shikleh, and to complete my anxiety the thought flashed upon me—who knows but these Arabs intend to strand us upon it in order to plunder us? But I did them injustice. After a hard struggle, they succeeded in recovering the sail, and putting the boat's head in the direction of Tunis. Heartily did T—— welcome us back to dry land as he helped us out of the boat, and I can safely say that I stepped on shore with a firm determination never again to seek on the Lake of Tunis a compensation for the want of riding-horses.

Yesterday we were present at the Sunday service

performed by Mr. Davis, in a room set apart for that purpose. Mr. Davis is a Pole by birth, and receives a yearly salary of £400 from the Scottish Presbyterian Church for propagating Christianity among the Moors. Many are said to have been converted, especially Jews; but whether this was not from covetousness rather than conviction I will not take upon me to say. At the close of the service yesterday two Jews were baptised, one of whom was ninety years of age. When I asked who was the old man, and what had induced him to abjure his creed at so advanced an age, answer was made me: "Only wait a few days, and you will see he will go back to Judaism; for he turns Christian whenever he is in want of money, and this is at least the twentieth time he has been baptised."

March 29th.

For several days there had been a talk about a large party and an excursion to one of the villas belonging to the Bey of the Camp, and to-day it came off. The day was certainly not very favourable, for a roaring hurricane sent the thick dust up to heaven, and we could hardly sit our horses or see an inch before us. But the Bey of the Camp had invited Mr. Davis and his party, including ourselves, to a Moorish

dinner at his distant country seat, Murnaghia, and this was an invitation not to be declined. We succeeded, quite contrary to our expectation, in hiring horses, though at a very dear rate, and early in the morning we repaired to Mr. Davis's house, the place of rendezvous for the whole party. Besides twelve persons on horseback, there were others filling three carriages, namely, Mr. Davis's and those of the Swedish and Sardinian Consuls. The latter was drawn by four horses, and made a dashing appearance, with its outriders in handsome Moorish costumes, and the dragoman who never left the coach-door.

We swept along at a tremendous pace, and to this hour I cannot comprehend how we escaped without an accident to any of us. Among those of our party who were on horseback was the daughter of the American Consul, a very charming girl, whose astonishing horsemanship I could not sufficiently admire. She rode a handsome iron-grey Arab, rather a vicious animal I suspect, but one that knew his rider well, and seemed only to curvet and bound playfully beneath her in order to show off her equestrian skill. To my mind, she realised the ideal of Tasso's Clorinda, or Walter Scott's Diana Vernon. Whenever the Bey meets her in her rides, he stops his carriage to admire her.

We passed the Bardo, forded the Manubah, and rode

a long way over bare hills, until at last we descried an oasis in the wilderness that lay round us. This was the Bey's villa, Murnaghia; and as we advanced, the large white building looked out upon us from a thicket of cypresses, palm, pomegranate, and olive trees. We left our horses in the large forecourt, and entered the palace, where we found a Moorish gentleman, who had been sent to Murnaghia by the Bey of the Camp to receive and entertain us. The villa was uninhabited, but most of the rooms were furnished with handsome carpets, mats, and divans; for they were to be occupied in a few days by a part of the Bey's harem. On entering the chief reception-room of the women, in which there was a large handsome latticed gallery, I was struck by a very strong scent of vanilla, and went into the gallery to see if I could discover through the lattice-work the flowers that sent forth such fragrant odours for the poor captives of the harem; but I could nowhere perceive the smallest plant of any kind, and was not a little surprised when I was afterwards informed that this strong perfume issued from a particular kind of wood, of which the lattice-work was made, when the sun shone upon it.

A completely Moorish dinner was provided for us in a room on the ground floor. Shoorbahs, that is to say, Arab soups, pilaus, maccaroni, kuskussus, and a multitude of viands, to me unknown, were set before us in large dishes with straw covers, on which the dirt lay an inch thick. I cannot give a detailed description

of the repast. Unfortunately a few spoonfuls of a shoorbah were enough to disgust me for ever with the Moorish *cuisine*, so nauseous was the predominant taste of rancid oil, musk, and other aromatics. Fortunately the consular ladies had provided the materials and the requisite accessories for a European repast, so that we were secured against the pangs of hunger. After dinner, we took coffee in the verandah, and then we walked in the garden.

I hope that Murnaghia is an Arabic synonyme for oasis, for no appellation could be more suitable to the spot. Anything more dreary and sterile than the environs I never beheld; never, on the other hand, have I seen a greater number of palms, or a richer vegetation, than within the limits of Murnaghia. I counted no fewer than fifty palm-trees on a single spot. This tree does not attain its full growth until it is fifty years old, and has been frequently transplanted; afterwards it continues to bloom for about seventy years, annually producing from fifteen to twenty clusters of dates, each of which weighs some twenty pounds. After this period, the tree begins to decay, and dies at last towards the end of its second century. The only care it requires is to be plentifully watered every four or five days. I am told that connoisseurs distinguish nearly a hundred different sorts of dates; for my part, I have only learned to discriminate one quality, which is of such exquisite flavour, that I know not what to compare it to. We are supplied with them of course from the best source,

and they are so fresh, that the bloom is still to be seen on them. Almonds bloom here as early as January, and bear fruit in April. Apricots are in season in May, and here, as in Greece, they are called in lingua franca, *mazza franca,* that is, kill Franks, because Europeans are prone to eat them too freely, and thereby expose themselves to fever—a fact to which F—— can testify, from his own experience in Athens three years ago. Various other kinds of fruit grow here, such as apples, pears, plums, and cherries, but they have not so much flavour as in Europe. Cherries, however, were formerly held in high estimation, and were called *hab el mellek,* or king's berries. Pomegranates sometimes reach four inches in diameter, and not unfrequently weigh a pound.

But it would seem as though Murnaghia offered little worth seeing, since I find myself running over the list of the Barbary fruits under the rustling palms and cypresses. The wind roared and whistled so loud through the leaves of the palms, and so bent the heads of the tall cypresses, and the sky was so gloomy and louring, that we began to be uneasy about our return, which would occupy at least three hours. We mounted our horses, surrounded by a crowd of maimed, blind, and aged beggars; and if the day's excursion had presented nothing of remarkable interest, we had at least the pleasure of knowing that it had afforded a rare feast to these poor wretches, since the almost untouched viands, so liberally provided for us by the Bey, were

divided amongst them. We counted every step that brought us nearer to Tunis, for the wind had fallen, and we expected every moment that the rain would burst down upon us with tropical violence; but, fortunately for us, it held up until we were safely housed.

XXVII.

A ball at the French Consul's—A Moorish bath.

March 31st.

I BELIEVE I have mentioned that a few hours after our arrival in Tunis we were invited to a masked ball at the French Cousul's. It was to have taken place at Shrovetide, but was put off till yesterday, in consequence of the melancholy political news from France, and by that postponement it lost one of the characteristic associations of the *bal masqué*. Only those who are acquainted with the indescribably filthy streets of Tunis can appreciate the daring rashness of accepting an invitation to a ball in that city, and I found myself in no little perplexity in endeavouring to solve the question, how to get there. To ride through the muddy streets in a ball dress was out of the question, still less was the notion of mounting a horse or a mule to be entertained. The arms of some Arabs who should carry Mrs. Roland and me on some sort of litter, as yet to be improvised, seemed

to us the only means of transport we could possibly command. Whilst we were deep in council together as to the execution of this plan, word was brought me that Mademoiselle Lagau's servant had come to know at what hour her porte-chaise should be sent to convey me to the ball. This hospitable offer relieved us from a grave embarrassment, and at ten o'clock I stepped into this, to me, as yet unknown kind of vehicle.

The Tunisian porte-chaises, which do not rightly correspond to their name, since they are not carried, but pushed forward on two small wheels by several Arabs, are the most uncomfortable of all vehicular contrivances with which I am acquainted. I have often heard that persons suffering under jaundice have been recommended to try riding in a cart without springs, as a remedy for their complaint. If I had a friend so afflicted in Tunis, I would counsel him to take an airing daily through the lanes and alleys of Tunis in Mademoiselle Lagau's porte-chaise. I was trundled along in it over stock and stone, and expected every moment to be pitched over, for every now and then I heard F—— and L—— shouting to the men to be careful—a caution which was of course unintelligible to the headlong rushing Arabs. Sometimes one of the wheels would plunge into a deep hole, or be tilted up by a heap of mud or stones, and thus I was bumped along in double quick time till a smoother motion gave me to understand that we had entered the consul's court-

yard and that my earnestly desired liberation was at hand. My toilette was very simple, otherwise it would have ill endured such treatment.

The Consul and his pretty daughter were very amiable, attentive hosts; but the arrival of the steamer from Bona greatly marred the gaiety of the evening. The heaps of journals, fresh from France, which lay upon the table, were formidable rivals to the dance-loving damsels, who sat pining and neglected whilst the gentlemen were immersed in politics. The latter, however, must afterwards have amended their behaviour, for the ball, as I was informed, was kept up until three o'clock. For my part, I did not feel well enough to remain longer than till midnight, at which early hour I quitted the ball-room, and again committed myself to my jolting vehicle.

April 1st.

A MOORISH bath is one of the tortures with which the traveller in the East must make acquaintance, and as I had long intended to undergo that martyrdom I resolved to do so to-day along with Mademoiselle d'H——, whilst the warm scirocco prevented the danger of our taking cold. We chose an hour at which the baths are not much frequented by native females, for otherwise we might have

found ourselves in the midst of thirty or forty of them, since private bath-chambers are not to be had. We took with us a negress who understood a little Italian, so that we might not be without help, in case the treatment we received from the attendants should be more than we could endure.

We first entered a vaulted quadrangular room, lighted from above; all round it ran a broad, high stone divan, covered with mats, and with stone blocks before it here and there, so that with two enormous strides one might ascend it. On this platform, where bathers just dripping from the steam-rooms had sat to cool themselves, we undressed ourselves; and as there was neither chair, table, nor peg to put our clothes on, we were obliged to lay them all upon the damp mats. In order to enter the next warmer room we had to put on a kind of patten, the sole of which was a piece of wood, five or six inches thick. Unaccustomed as we were to such a kind of *chaussure* it was almost impossible for us to go alone, especially over the slippery marble floor each of us therefore had to be supported by two women, and in that way we passed through the various bath-rooms, which were scantily lighted from above, and were filled with hotter and hotter steam, in regular gradation from one end of the suite to the other. One would suppose that such a very elevated temperature would be very disagreeable, nay intolerable, but it only appeared so during the first

few minutes. When we had entered the last chamber, the fifth I believe it was, and the flags were so hot that I was obliged to stand now on one side now on another—for our thick pattens had been taken from us before this—I felt a lively sympathy for those poor brutes who are taught to dance in that cruel way. Now at last began our real martyrdom, for all the torments of Orcus and Erebus seemed to have their abode in this last chamber. Large buckets full of almost boiling water, bowls filled with the most disgusting chocolate-like substance, and harsh little fibrous tufts, made for scraping the skin, were the attributes of a band of diabolical nymphs that only awaited the signal to exercise their torturing arts upon us. They were negresses and mulattoes, all of them old and most of them one eyed; and save a scanty garment, their costume was that of paradisaical innocence. On our arrival they thought themselves bound to do the honours of their elysium, and they set up a song that would well have become a witches' sabbath; then they danced wild Moorish dances before us, and finally they fell upon us without mercy, laid us down on the hot flags, plastered us from head to foot with the chocolate-like stuff, scraped us down with the rough fibrous tufts, and sluiced us with boiling water. In this last process some of them used small sieves, so that for a moment we might have fancied ourselves transformed into fair flowers, were

it not that others of them now and then dashed buckets of hot water over us from head to foot, so that we might rather have taken ourselves for dirty coaches.

The mysterious half-light of the rooms, the streaming and dropping of the water, the melancholy mewing of some amorous cats, the infernal choir around us, whose demoniacal songs re-echoed through the vaulted rooms, all this made an eternity of the few hours we here spent in pain and dread, and Mademoiselle d'H—— and I could only reiterate: "Once is all very well, but catch me coming here a second time!" By this time we were in such a plight that we almost despaired of ever again being fit to be seen. Our hair, Mademoiselle d'H——'s especially, which reached nearly to her knee, were daubed and streaked with the brown unguent, in a way that was really piteous to see. We had already been led back to the first room, stretched out on the divan and well-kneaded by the women, when we heard the voices of F—— and T—— in the ante-room; for they had grown uneasy about our long absence, and concluded that we had been taken ill during the operation. We called out to them to wait for us, for we hoped soon to be out of the fangs of the furies. When that happy deliverance at last took place, and F—— asked me how I liked a Moorish bath, I could only answer, "So little, that I would not inflict one on my worst enemy."

XXVIII.

Abdellia—Antiquities—Polite visit of an executioner.

April 2nd.

To-DAY we had again fine summer weather, of which we availed ourselves to ride out to Abdellia and take an early dinner with our amiable Consul. I can never cross the threshold of the handsome, spacious palace, which the present Bey has erected in the European style for our Consul, without thinking of the atrocities formerly committed here. The palace of Abdellia was built by the infamous tyrant, Ali Bey, who frequently resided in it; and often, as he sat under the colonnade of the patios, indolently smoking his pipe, he indulged in his favourite pastime—ordering several slaves to be brought forth from the subterraneous dungeons and beheaded before his eyes.

Abdellia lies near the handsome village El Mersa, which is surrounded by many villas, inhabited by wealthy Moorish families and foreign consuls. We were the only guests at our Consul's residence, and after dinner he was good enough to show us several interesting objects, among others, a very beautiful and well-preserved ancient silver coin, as large as a Spanish dollar and as heavy as three. On one side of it was a fine head of Ceres, on the other, a winged horse with the word Panormus under it in Phœnician characters. The British Museum offered Sir Thomas Reade fifty pounds for this coin, but he refused the offer, for to

the numismatic connoisseur the value of the coin is inestimable. A Greek brought it to Sir Thomas Reade from the interior of Africa.

We were much struck by a pair of wooden shoes, which had been found in a tomb, and bore evident marks of wear. F——'s foot, which is of the usual size, reaches only from the heel of one of these giant shoes, to the part where the upper leather begins.

Sir Thomas Reade possesses the models of the two largest diamonds in Tunis, of which I have already made mention, having had occasion to admire them on Lillah's hand in the harem. What surprized me not a little was to hear from Sir Thomas Reade that the Bey had purchased these jewels from the celebrated firm of Rundell and Bridge, in London, and that our Consul himself had concluded the bargain, which accounted for his possession of the models. The larger of the two diamonds is worth £5,000. Among the curiosities Sir Thomas was good enough to show us, I must not omit to mention two splendid gold snuff-boxes, studded with diamonds and jewels, presented to our Consul by the present and the late king of Sardinia.

April 6th.

SOME time ago, F—— told me he had been accosted as a countryman by two German renegades, a Ham-

burgher and a Prussian, who have been for many years in the Bey's service. I had not yet seen either of them until to-day, when, as I sat alone writing, a German named Abdallah, had himself announced. I desired he should be admitted and immediately guessed he was one of the renegades whom F—— had met. I told him F—— was not at home, but as he did not seem disposed to terminate his visit, I offered him a chair, took up my work, and asked him to tell me what had induced him to abjure his religion, and bid an eternal farewell to his native land. The man's adventures have been indeed so strange and manifold that they occupy, with good reason, a part of Mr. Davis's little book on Northern Africa. A hasty outline of them is all I shall give here.

Johann Gottlieb Krüger, a native of Rhenish Prussia, was enrolled in the Prussian army in his twentieth year, deserted from it and proceeded to Algiers, where he entered the French army to become again a eserter. He fled into the interior of Africa, was taken prisoner by the Arabs, and only saved his life by adopting the turban and the Mahometan creed, along with which he received the name of Mohammed-Ben-Abdallah. Subsequently he endured great hardships and cruel usage, was repeatedly detected in secret attempts to escape, and sold as a slave, and often saw himself in imminent danger of death from the barbarous people or the wild beasts of the vast steppes of Africa. After many years spent in this way, Fortune

smiled on him again. He passed into the hands of the Bey of the Camp, who brought him to Tunis and transferred him to his cousin Achmet, the reigning Bey.

After Abdallah had told me all this in great detail, I asked him what post he now occupied in the Bey's service, "Oh," he replied in a deep, hollow voice, "I am not a soldier nor in the police; I am neither a Mameluke nor a hamba; I am—what is called an executioner." No sooner had he uttered the last word than an involuntary scream of horror burst from my lips, my work fell from my hands, and with one bound I flew to the furthest corner of the room. "Don't be alarmed, Madam," he said, when he saw what a magic effect the name of his function had upon me; "it is not so bad as you suppose; we are called *shater*, it is true, which means executioner, but the duties are not the same as in Europe. I assure you I have never yet executed anybody."

Though this asseveration by no means removed from my mind the unpleasant thought, that I had sat for an hour in friendly chat with the executioner of Tunis, still I made the best of a bad business, and conscious that in Africa one must make up one's mind to many strange things—even to receiving the visit of an executioner with equanimity, I resumed my work and sat down again to hear the rest of what my strange visitor had to tell me. "There are nine of us," he continued, "all renegades; for none else

can hold the office of shater. It is our special duty to receive the Bey, on his arrival in the Bardo on audience days. Four of us stand on his right hand, and five on his left when he is giving audience. And at the reading of certain documents we have to hold our swords down." Then he went on to give me so minute a description of various punishments, that I could not help thinking that even if the name of shater was only an honorary distinction, still he was too deeply versed in the art and mystery of the headsman to make me feel quite at ease in his company.

I had heard that capital punishments took place daily in Tunis, and I asked Abdallah if that was the case; whereupon he assured me positively that not one had taken place within the last twelve months. A previous remark of the renegade's that he was bound to secrecy as to all transactions at which he had been present, gave me grounds for greatly doubting his veracity, and I could hardly refrain from believing that his hands were dyed with recently-shed blood. This hindered me from diligently attending to the detailed account he gave me of all the various modes of execution that were practised. Among the few points of his lecture which I retained, were the following.

Native offenders, who are condemned to death, are taken early in the morning to the Casbah, where they are strangled, after which, their bodies are laid on the ground before the building,

with a coverlet over them; and there they remain until four in the afternoon, when if they are not claimed by any relation or friend, they are buried by the Government.

Abdallah further told me, that the present Bey prefers giving women the bastonnade to throwing them into the water; he himself knew one who had received no fewer than four hundred blows, notwithstanding which, she was now quite hale and sound—a fact which only proves, as I suspect, that this woman had received her punishment at the hands of very good friends. The renegade was beginning to recount to me how he had himself received three hundred blows, when F—— entered the room and interrupted his not very pleasing discourse.

On the whole, Abdallah appears to me to be quite satisfied with his present position. He has been thirteen years a resident in Tunis, and far from desiring to return to the faith of his fathers, he wears the turban from choice, has for ever renounced his native land and married a Moorish woman—but separated from her again, if I mistake not.

XXIX.

Excursion to Arriana—Preparations for one to Zowan—Our escort—Wild Flowers—Locusts—Town of Zowan.

April 7th.

To-day, for the first time, we visited the charming village of Arriana, which is but a few hours' drive

from Tunis, and to which, the few foreigners who arrive here, generally make their first excursion. It contains a profusion of handsome villas, and from the belvedere of the Swedish consul's house, we had an opportunity to admire the handsomest part of the environs of Tunis. Miss Heap, the American Consul's daughter, of whose equestrian prowess I have before spoken, obligingly offered me the use of her spirited Arab; but as the acceptance of her offer would have deprived us of her agreeable society, I declined it, and begged her to be our cicerone to Arriana. She took us first to the belvedere and then through a fine olive grove to the village, which delighted us by the luxuriance of its vegetation and the genuine oriental character of its environs. We hope very often again, if not to ride, at least to drive thither, for the intense sirocco quite destroyed the pleasure of our ride to-day. Our horses were jaded, and the country veiled in a dense cloud of dust.

In the evening we supped with Mr. Lindon, and met the Spanish Consul and his wife. The latter, who had just arrived from Spain, understood only her mother tongue, so that little else than Spanish was spoken during the evening, and for awhile I fancied myself transported to the land of love and song. I was roused from my dream when something was handed to me by Mohammed the negro, in his Moorish gala dress, and I felt a strong yearning

for the beautiful peninsula with whose quondam inhabitants we are now making acquaintance.

April 8th.

So far then, all is arranged for our journey to Zowan; for be it known, that for more than eight days I have been moving heaven and earth to accomplish a little excursion into the interior of the country. Not a little proud am I of the success with which I have hitherto conducted the preliminaries for this design, for it is really no easy matter to get one's self fairly in motion in this country, as witness the many fruitless attempts we have heretofore made to that end. But perhaps the reader will imagine that I make mountains of mole-hills, and that matters are not so bad in reality as I represent them to be; perhaps he will suppose, that in this country one has only to get on the back of a horse and ride to the world's end; — perhaps he will suppose that Africa and Europe are all one;—but I say no, and I speak from what every day's experience tells me more and more plainly. The moment one has made up his mind to pass one night beyond the town walls, yet without surrendering himself to the tender mercies of the tribes and the wild beasts, the enterprise becomes an affair of state. He must look upon his Consul as a father confessor, and tell

him to a hair's-breadth whither he is going, and how long he will be away; these particulars are reported to the Bey by one of his ministers, and then a rescript is made out wherein the Bey enjoins the inhabitants of the towns or the tribes through which the traveller is to pass, to receive him hospitably upon his showing the said rescript, and to furnish him with all he requires. The costs which the towns-people incur for the stranger are allowed them in the course of the year, when the tax-gatherers make their rounds, and the Moor, at whose house he alights, rejoices at the profitable opportunity; for he counts on giving the stranger a mere nothing, and charging the Bey with twelve times what he expends.

When the rescript is made out, the Bey puts his seal to it with his own hand, and it is then delivered to a trusty mameluke, who is not to lose sight of the stranger, since he is answerable for the life of the latter with his own. Now a Mameluke of this sort is a person of respectability, who cannot travel without servants, and so he is allotted a retinue of one, two, or more hambas; but neither mameluke nor hambas understand a word of Italian, and therefore a dragoman is indispensable.

Well, we had succeeded with the help of our good Consul, in procuring a mameluke provided with a hamba and a dragoman, who, to be sure, knew but a few words of Italian. But the main question remained to be solved: how were we

to get horses? We required four. For this matter too, we had no resource but in Sir Thomas Reade's good offices. He sent for the Maltese from whom we desired to hire the horses, and by dint of threats prevailed on them to engage that the animals should be forthcoming.

I think I have now said enough to justify my assertion that it is no easy matter to get out of Tunis.

April 9th.

Our strenuous efforts have been crowned with success, for at half-past five this morning, with the first streak of dawn, came knocking at our door, one after the other, the mameluke, the hamba, the dragoman and several Maltese. The bustle and clatter of weapons—for all except the Maltese were armed with long guns or swords—never ceased in the gallery, and must have awakened many of our neighbours from their sweet morning slumber. After all, it was seven o'clock before we had breakfasted, and our slender baggage and small stock of provisions were fastened on the horses' backs. As we were quitting the hotel, my Maltese begged me in a confidential whisper to take care that the horse I rode had plenty to eat, because it was the

only *cavallo cristiano,* that is, the only one belonging to a Christian.

I had never before been abroad at so early an hour, either within or without the town, and therefore I was not a little surprised to find the streets filled with Arabs, Bedouins, Maltese, Jews and negroes, so that to gain a passage through the almost impenetrable mass we were obliged to cry out without ceasing *beilick, beilick,* out of the way, out of the way! I find in general, that the morning aspect of every town is different from that which it wears later in the day. The atmosphere is lighter and more cheeful as it were, before it has felt the burthen of the day, and there are many things to be noticed at the golden hour of morning that are not to be seen at any other time. As we slowly made our way through the human mass, I thought of Boz's inimitable descriptions of the London streets in their morning *négligé,* and of Lane street on a November afternoon—descriptions that so vividly impress the reader's imagination, that when thousands of miles away from Lane street he seems to hear the muffin man's bell and the cry of hot potatoes.

The flocks of goats, the laden camels, mules and asses, and the vendors of all sorts of goods, who were afterwards to give place more or less to another set, were now absolute masters of the place, and would not allow us to pursue our way

one after the other in uninterrupted file. It was not until we had passed the Aliah gate, that we could survey our little caravan; and although I have already mentioned that it consisted of F——, T——, myself, our mameluke, hamba and dragoman, I must nevertheless subjoin a few words to tell what we looked like as we wended our way over the wide plain between the hills of the Manubah and Bel-Hassan. We rode at a slow walk, the only pace to be thought of when once one is under the rule of a mameluke.

The Maltese had been compelled by Sir Thomas Reade, as I have stated, to let me have my favourite grey horse; but in order to have their revenge in some way upon us, they had fed the animal with young corn, and thereby so disordered its internal economy that I feared it would scarcely be able to carry me a mile. F—— and T—— rode horses that should have possessed many virtues, for the Graces had not assisted at their birth, nor endowed them with the dangerous gift of beauty, nor did their condition show they had been exposed to the contagion of courtly vices at the Bey's plenteous mangers. But how shall I give a true picture of our sorry retinue? To say that the mameluke and dragoman were mounted on veritable skeletons of horses is hardly an exaggeration; yet the hamba on his little ass, of the same grey hue as the rider's burnouse, cut if possible a still queerer figure. Seen

from behind, the hamba presented the appearance of a grey triangle; for the hood of his wide burnouse, that completely enveloped him, stuck up in a point on his head, and the only movement of which this odd figure seemed capable was to lay his long gun across his saddle, or to fondle it in his arms like a sweetheart. Our mameluke's uniform was so indescribably shabby and threadbare that it was with extreme difficulty I could guess the original complexion of its several parts. It consisted of a faded green jacket, a scarf that had once been red, an old fez, and wide trowsers fastened below the knees, leaving to view two dark brown bare legs, and feet stuck in wretched old shoes to which a pair of enormously long spurs were attached. A burnouse, that looked as if it had never been new, covered this more picturesque than elegant costume.

About a league from Tunis we had a distant view of the Bey's palace of Mahmudia, now converted into barracks for the Nezan-jereed. We then passed the river Milian, the same which empties itself into the lake of Tunis, between Rhades and Hamamlif, and which I have before-mentioned as the Catada of the ancients. Fortunately the water was not very deep, so that after searching out a convenient place for crossing we had no reason to regret the destruction of the bridge, the remains of which are so inconsiderable that we could not tell whether they were of Roman or Moorish architecture. We

followed the course of the stream over a grassy plain, leaving the beautiful remains of the Carthaginan aqueduct on our right.

I had heard that the Flora of the Tunisian regency was indescribably beautiful, and in this excursion I had opportunities to perceive that it surpasses all that the imagination of a European could conceive of it. The present is the most favourable season for the contemplation of its beauties, for now all Nature wears its most blooming aspect. We rode, literally, over a carpet of flowers, of the brightest hues. The manifold variety of the blue flowers, and the lustre of their different shades was very striking. At some distance across the plain we saw a blue gleam, just such as would be caused by the reflection of the cloudless sky in a sheet of water left standing after heavy rain; but as the weather was dry, we thought this explanation of the phenomenon was improbable, and rode up to the blue spot to investigate its real nature. Great was our surprize to find, that what we had taken for a broad watery mirror was nothing but a great bed of the most beautiful wild flowers. Never in my life did I so much regret as I did this day that I was not a botanist. I can well imagine with what intense delight any one possessing some knowledge of that interesting science, might investigate the Flora of these regions.

In continual admiration of the gorgeous carpet on which our horses trod, we pursued our way to

Uthina, under the ancient ruins of which we intended to make our mid-day halt. As we rode on we perceived before us a broad black line, intersecting our untrodden road, and stretching in a sinuous form further away over the plain. We supposed at first it was some darker stratum of earth; but when our horses' feet were close upon it, up rose, with a loud noise, a cloud of little locusts, about as big as a bee and of the colour of a grey pea. The sound was like the rattling down of dry peas on a board. Our horses seemed quite used to this phenomenon, for they walked with entire indifference through the swarm. Once before, in one of our excursions from Tunis, we had found ourselves in the midst of a tract similarly overspread with locusts, and on afterwards making inquiries respecting what was to me so novel a sight, I was told that these locusts were the same as those mentioned in the Bible, but had not yet attained their full growth. Others maintained that these small locusts were quite a distinct species from the biblical locusts, and that they were quite full grown, a conjecture which seems to me the more probable of the two. The creatures were as harmless as flies.

After four hours' riding we reached the ruins of the ancient Uthina. During the last hour, the way had lain over a soil strewed with loose stones and old fragments of masonry, and the sun had begun to shine with African intensity; we were therefore glad enough to have reached a resting place where we

might pass the sultry hours of mid-day, under the shade of the silent ruins.

Uthina was built partly on the plain and partly on the point of junction of two hills. The existing ruins give token of a once considerable town. They comprise the remains of an Acropolis situated on a high rock, with large excavations, that served as cisterns or magazines; the ruins of a very large palace, smaller cisterns, two temples, an aqueduct, a bridge in good preservation, and several smaller buildings. Excepting a few Bedouins, who have pitched their poor tents here and there, the place is destitute of inhabitants. The Mameluke averred, that on showing the Bey's rescript, we should obtain all kinds of refreshments from the people of the tents; we found, however, that the only thing to be had was some grass, which the children cut for our horses. Rightly anticipating that the provisions to be supplied us, in obedience to the Bey's behest would turn out to be an oriental figment, we had fortunately provided ourselves with some refreshments, and whilst Ali, our dragoman, was unpacking them, we set about exploring the ruins.

We began by descending into the cisterns or magazines above-mentioned; but it was like entering the cave of the cattle-lifter, Cacus, or the hideous abode of the Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum, for a large herd of oxen, startled by our appearance, capered about before us in the oddest way, and made the rocks ring with their bellowings. I half expected to hear the shrill pipe of the cyclops driving his flock up the mountain; however, in the hope of being rewarded by the sight of some specimens of ancient architecture that might be worth seeing, we advanced further into the cave. We did not find it inhabited by a cyclops with a huge club; still we were reminded by a terrible discovery of the warning given us by Mr. Lindon, that we should not enter the cisterns of Uthina, for a multitude of ravenous fleas fell suddenly upon us, like Egyptian locusts, to devour us. Whence they came, and why the enormous colony of these usually social insects thus retired to this lonely spot in order to torment the few travellers who visit it, is more than I can tell; but I know I was nearer to crying than laughing when I found that the whole time

of our halt was to be spent in endeavouring to rid ourselves of the horrid little creatures instead of exploring the ruins of Uthina.

We looked about for a spot of shade where we might rid ourselves of our plagues, and enjoy our frugal repast, but in vain, for after what we had experienced, we durst not venture again into the cistern. Very glad we were when our horses had had sufficient rest, and we could mount them again. We left Uthina with expectations entirely disappointed, and with countless unbidden guests on our clothes, and, above all, with the firm determination to give the place a wide berth on our return, and to advise every traveller to avoid it, since all we got by our visit there, was to make acquaintance with a legion of African fleas, and I can positively declare that they are not at all more agreeable companions than our European fleas.

We hoped that the motion of our horses would afford us a slight current of cool air, but not the least zephyr moved, and it seemed as if Æolus had bid farewell for ever to the earth. With heads hanging low, our horses heavily dragged their faint legs one after the other, carrying us through

a desolate region in which there was neither tent, nor hut, nor tree, nor a living creature to be seen. Our shadows showed fainter and fainter on the white chalky soil; the clear cloudless sky became overcast, and its bright blue was turned in one quarter into blackish grey; the distant muttering of thunder foretold the approach of a storm. For three hours we had endured indescribably sultry heat, when we were suddenly roused by an unexpected coolness, which was to be accounted for by the outbreak of a storm at some distanee.

Hitherto the fantastic forms of the Zowan Mountain, towards which we rode, had been veiled by an extremely thick haze; and whilst we were admiring the beauty of the landscape, which increased with every step, we were quite surprised at suddenly seeing the Zowan quite clearly, and being able to distinguish the houses of the small town of the same name, which stands on the first declivity of the mountain. There cannot be a greater contrast than between the cultivation in the neighbourhood of Zowan, and the barren region between it and Tunis, and nothing could be more welcome to us after an uncomfortable day, than to find ourselves all at once in such a paradise.

Anything more beautiful than the landscape before us, or more luxuriant than its vegetation, can hardly be conceived. A religious calm reigned around, broken only by the melancholy notes of the nightingale, the summer cry of the cuckoo, and the twittering of countless other birds. A wide thickly shaded road led up the mountain to the old gate of the little town of Zowan, and, until we had entered it, I should rather have supposed myself at the entrance of an English park, than of a small town on a mountain of North Africa, had not the many cypresses, palms, and cactus hedges served to indicate the nature of the clime. But all illusion ceases the moment one has passed within the gate; for the very narrow unpeopled streets consist only of a chaos of half-fallen houses, that threaten to bury the new comer under their ruins.

Our arrival caused no little excitement in this genuine Moorish town, where certainly here is not one European resident. The Mameluke had sent the hamba on before from Uthina, to show the Sheik of the place the Bey's rescript, and demand night-quarters for us. When a Sheik has read such a rescript, he determines what family shall

receive the stranger, and orders it to hold a certain number of rooms in readiness. This duty, or rather this advantage, generally falls to the lot of the Jews, whether it be that the Mahommedans regard it as a disgrace to harbour Christians, or that there is more comfort to be had by the traveller in the houses of the Jews. Every doorway was filled with gazers as we rode through the streets of Zowan; the news of our arrival appeared to spread very rapidly, and the curious population escorted us to the house of the Jew, whom the Sheik had appointed to receive us. Our poor tired horses found their way into the small covered court of our host's house, as if they had previously carried their riders thither, after many a similar fatiguing tour. We dismounted in presence of the Sheik and several other town authorities, who all greeted us with a salem alek and a kiss of the hand; and we gave our horses to the hamba to take them to the market place where they were to pass the night.

A violent contest now arose between our host and the Mameluke; for the former wanted not only to quarter us all three in a small chamber; but also to make us share it with a portion of his own family. Even the most friendly discourse between

two Orientals sounds in our ears like fierce wrangling; but if the two are of different opinions, it always seems to me that nothing but sabre cuts or pistol shots can terminate such a dialogue. Fortunately it did not come to that on the present occasion, the upshot of the long and loud dispute being, that we were conducted up a singularly narrow and steep staircase into a little room in the upper story, without windows, or any other furniture than a mat. A small uncovered platform separated it from a very cheerless room, which was assigned to T——. A few crazy pieces of furniture were all we could obtain by the reiterated display of the Bey's rescript. As for bedding, washing apparatus, and other indispensable things, they were not to be thought of, but we were so faint with thirst that we longed only for drink. The Sheik brought us lemons and water to make lemonade.

Delightful as the open air is in these regions, to abide within doors is just as much the reverse; and as some parting gleams of sunshine were still tinging the horizon, we tried to forget that we had ridden fifty miles, and told the dragoman we

wished to see something of the town; but Ali replied that we could venture abroad without the mameluke, and must not commit ourselves to his guidance. The mameluke took us first through several narrow streets, obstructed with the rubbish of fallen houses, to a large fez dyeing establishment. Zowan is in high repute, both for the bleaching of linen and for the dyeing of fezes, which are sent thither to that end from Tunis, Susa, and other places. The stream which is now used for that purpose was formerly conveyed along the River Zungler to Carthage by an aqueduct. The water possesses the peculiar property of imparting an extraordinary brilliancy to the red colour, and of preventing its fading soon. Before the fezes are dyed, they are boiled for a whole day in alum and water; the material employed for the dye is kermes, or the scarlet berries which are grown chiefly in Beyjah, and for those of the finest quality a little cochineal is added. Behind the dyeing establishment there was a little garden all gleaming red from a multitude of fezes stuck on forms to dry, and looking like a regiment of inverted flower-pots. We were greatly struck by the fine view

prcsented by the small luxuriant valley, which lay between the high ground on which we stood and the crags of the imposing mountain of Zowan.

Zowan is a thriving little town of twelve thousand inhabitants. It is probably the Tuburbo major of the ancients, and subsequently became like Sidi Bosaid, a city of refuge. On one of the old town gates there is a ram's head in bas-relief with the legend, "Auxilio," whence some infer that Zowan was under the protection of Jupiter Ammon. The prospect from this spot is extensive and grand, and hence it is conjectured that here Agathocles was gratified with a view of the lands of the Adrumentines and Carthaginians. But the charms of an expected kuskussu seemed greatly to outweigh in our mameluke's estimation all the beauties of nature; so he hurried us off to our uninhabitable quarters and deposited us there, just as one locks up some loose valuable lest it should be stolen. The Sheik sent us a regular dinner; but it was too Moorish to tempt us to touch any one of the many dishes composing it, and the Bey's shoobahs at Murnaghia was still too fresh in my recollection to allow me to do my palate such injustice. After much labour, and with the help of the Sheik, the

mameluke, hamba, dragoman, and several inhabitants of the town, assembled on our flat roof, we contrived to boil some water and make tea.

Whilst writing this, I am also feeding with milk a little hare about ten days old, which the Sheik has laid at my feet. Such a substitute for a lap dog I never before possessed; and I am so charmed with the creature that I intend to rear it, and take it with me to Europe. How prettily it laps the milk drop by drop, how it stares at me with its large eyes, working its long ears like telegraphs, as if it would say, "I know you won't do me any harm." But my young protégé has been sadly mauled by the teeth of the dog that caught him, and I fear I shall not see the day when he shall discourse to Roman hares about the Mons Zeugitanus. But, indeed, they could not understand him, for he speaks only Arabic.

XXX.

Ascent of the Zowan—Perilous descent—Ancient temple—Startling news.

April 10th.

Though I write these lines on the top of the Mons Ziguensis, or Zeugitanus, of ancient renown, let it not be supposed that I desire to imitate Lady Hesther Stanhope, who took it into her head to indite an

epistle on the top of Pompey's Pillar; but as T—— is engaged in drawing, and F—— in reading, and I have brought my diary with me, to enter in it the various occurrences of the day, I think I may much more agreeably record our ride hither in the cool shade of the dark foliage, and in view of the noble landscape, stretched out at my feet, than in our miserable chamber.

When the rosy-fingered Aurora came forth, she found us ready for this excursion. As we had to return at night to Zowan, we left our hamba there, and took with us, instead of him, two Arabs acquainted with the country, to show us the best of the bad roads to this elevation. After threading the muddy lanes of Zowan, we found ourselves separated from the mountain by a luxuriant garden-like valley, along which we had to make our way for a considerable distance before we began the ascent. No words can depict the charms of this region, which combines the grandest and most sublime with the tenderest and loveliest aspects of nature. Gardens, overgrown with fruit trees of all kinds, encompass the little town of Zowan; clear streams gush from countless rocky clefts, trickle down the mountain side, and, after setting several mills in motion, are

lost to view in a deep chasm; graceful snow-white marabous gleam out here and there from the dark foliage. On our right, stretching away to the mountain of Ussaler, swathed in blue ether, lies a rich plain, bounded in part by wood-clad hills; whilst, on our left, the craggy Mons Zeugitanus towers in imposing grandeur immediately beyond the town of Zowan.

We had not gone far before we became aware, not only that neither of our two guides from Zowan knew anything of the road we ought to take, but also that the mameluke and Ali had no mind that our excursion should extend as far as to the plateau. All four maintained that there was no plateau at all, and the end of the matter was, that we had ourselves to guide our guides. It cost us two hours and a half of hard work to reach this point, clambering over loose beds of stone, up steep crags, and through bushes and briars, accompanied by the hearty execrations of our guides, which we fortunately did not understand; but we have been fully rewarded for our perseverance, for the view is incomparably fine. The air to-day is so clear, that we can distinctly discern Tunis, with its majestic bay, and its two lakes, Sidi Bosaid, the mountains over Ghar-el-

Milah, the Bardo, the snow-capped Elkaf, Djebel Ussales, and many other hills and mountain chains, the names of which I cannot recapitulate, as I heard them but cursorily.

The plateau on which we stand is very small. The fountain of Sidi-ben-el-Hassan, a large pit constructed to hold snow for the Bey's use, which now appears to be disused, the marabou of Sidi Booghari, and some kind of ruined farm building, are all the place owes to the work of human hands. But if it bears few traces of man's existence, on the other hand, it is all the more the resort of wild beasts of every kind. On the spot where we are now sitting so peacefully, and where everything around looks so smiling and serene, roaring lions roam about every night in quest of prey, and the clefts of the rocks above us are peopled with eagles, vultures, and kites. The few cattle pastured here and there must all be housed at sunset, for otherwise every head of them would be devoured before morning. Now as we intend taking a circuitous route on our way back to Zowan, and stopping awhile at a temple, and as we should not like to fall into the clutches of lions, I will shut up my book, and propose to F—— and T—— that we shall begin our descent.

Zowan ; at noon.

The mountain we had climbed with immense toil, and in constant danger of breaking our horses' limbs and our own, could only be descended on foot. We left our horses to get down as they could, half walking, half sliding, for we had enough to do to take care of ourselves. We were quite exhausted, and almost melted with heat, when we got to the foot of the mountain ; and although the few inhabitants of the plateau had hospitably entertained us with milk and butter, and we ourselves had taken something with us to complete a frugal meal, still we were not a little rejoiced when, just as we were mounting our horses, a handsome Bedouin boy came up with a huge bowl of fresh milk, and gave us to understand, by a couple of words, "Arfi, Arfi," (master, master) that the refreshing beverage was intended for us. And fortunate it was that we had it just then, for we had no notion what a hard ride we should have before we reached the temple, or what seeming impossibilities may be overcome in Africa, even with jaded horses.

I will not attempt to convey the least idea of the sort of ground we had to cross. At first we agreed our people must have made a mistake, or that they had

made a wager that they would take us this frightful steeple-chase; but when we found that things did not mend, but that we had to scramble over and through every gulley, swamp, stream, hole, and thicket, and that to our repeated question, what they meant by exposing us to such dangers, our people only returned the laconic answer, "Quest' è la strada,"—then, indeed, we began to think the affair was no joke. We had no choice, however, but to resign ourselves to our fate, and heroically to meet, as it seemed, inevitable death *à la Mazeppa*. We hugged our horses' necks with the gripe of fell despair; fear and amazement paralyzed every tongue, and the only sound that broke the silence was the tottering tread of the horses over the loose beds of stone, or the cursing and swearing of our men, when the animals all refused to commit suicide by plunging down a precipice, or climbing up a perpendicular face of rock. There occurred truly critical moments in which we quite involuntarily put ourselves into positions of increased danger, because it was impossible to pause and reflect, or to turn back. In spite, however, of our anxiety and danger, I could not help laughing when one of our men, whose horse was in so perpendicular an attitude

that the rider could not keep his seat, lost his fez, and thereupon a long-tangled lock rolled snake-like down from his shaven head upon his back. I have been told that all Mahommedans keep one unshorn lock on their heads, which Mohammed, as some say, is to cut off at his second appearance, or with which, as others opine, the prophet is to pull the wearers up to heaven.

In spite of all dangers and difficulties, we reached the temple in safety. It is situated two miles from the town of Zowan, at the foot of a very craggy mountain, but still at a considerable elevation above the plain. It is built over several springs, which here unite and supply water to the gigantic aqueduct which reaches to Carthage, a distance of seventy-two Italian miles. The temple is a hundred and eighteen feet long, and as many wide. In its northern end, there is a niche where stood a statue of Hercules, Diana, or Minerva—among divinities the usual protectors of springs and fountains. The rest of the temple is uncovered, but was formerly surrounded by a broad gallery, with twenty-six columns. Between the two flights of steps leading to the temple is a large basin, shaded by tropic plants. Here we reposed for awhile after our fatiguing ride, enjoying

the concert provided for us by a choir of nightingales and a multitude of other birds. A garden abounding with all sorts of tropical and other plants, which stands on the bank of the rivulet, and belongs to a Morocco man, contributed not a little to adorn this delicious spot, where I would fain have tarried longer, and yielded myself up wholly to the fascinations of nature. But we were obliged to tear ourselves away, and only consecrate to the recollection of this lovely scene a place in the picture gallery of our fancy.

Ali and our other guides seemed really to have a design upon our lives; and though we had been preserved by a special providence from all accident on our way to the temple, yet for my part, I fully expected to be left for dead on the last part of our journey. We had to ride for some space along a deep narrow gully, with the water reaching to our horses' knees, and the bushes on either side so thick and entangled as to be quite impenetrable. At last I found myself in a horrible thorn brake, from which I could not extricate myself, without leaving half my clothes, and perhaps a portion of my face behind me. Fortunately my horse was barricaded like myself, and could not stir. In that unpleasant

position I was forced to remain until Ali and the dragoman had cut away the branches about me with sabres; and as they could not see me, but laid about them at a venture, I did not feel at all at ease whilst the operation was going on. But we were fully compensated for all our trouble by the charming scenery through which we passed. I can only say of the country round Zowan, that it is the most beautiful I have ever seen, whether in Europe, Asia, or Africa, and that it combines together the charms of all other lands.

On arriving at our quarters that evening, and before we dismounted from our horses, a letter was delivered to us by the Sheik. A letter in Zowan! What could it mean? Could it be that after we had waited so many weeks in vain for a steamer, one should have arrived just at the very moment when we had ventured, for the first time, upon a somewhat longer excursion than usual? The letter contained only a few hurried lines from Mr. Lindon, to this effect:—"A steamer has made its appearance on the horizon; it is supposed to be an English one from Malta. Make haste back, therefore, if you wish to go back by it."

T—— turned pale at the mere thought of such an opportunity, and beheld in imagination the steamer, like a lost Paradise, already returning from Tunis to Malta, whilst he himself, panting and groaning in dust and heat, was ineffectually endeavouring to urge his lame horse on from Zowan to Tunis, so that he should be doomed, perhaps, to several months' captivity. And all for what? For the sake of riding through a swarm of locusts, being eaten alive by millions of fleas in the cisterns of Uthina, sharing very nasty sleeping quarters with several Arabs, and having it to say that he had ascended the old Mons Zeugitanus, and had many narrow escapes from a frightful death. What pen could describe all that passed in his inmost bosom on hearing this intelligence? Not mine, certainly. But I have no right to jest at our friend's anxiety, for it was fully shared by ourselves. Never did steamer arrive more inopportunely. Could we have procured fresh horses, we would have ridden all night, though I very much doubt whether our Mentor, the mameluke, would have consented to such a proceeding. As usual, we had no alter-

native but to submit to our fate, only making all possible provisions for starting early next morning.

The settling of this point seemed to afford some relief to T——'s perturbation of mind; he became tolerably composed, but I, on the contrary, had to endure another hard trial; for the first thing I saw on entering our room was my little hare, my youngest hopeful fosterling, which I had already christened Zeugitanus, stretched lifeless on the floor. I took up the little corpse, and discovered that a wound inflicted by the teeth of the dog that had caught it was the cause of its death.

Here I must close for the present, for not only the day's fatigue and the state of excitement into which we are thrown by our uncertainty as to our future proceedings, but also the numerous unbidden Moorish guests that surround me, and the want of a table (for the only one we possess is just put in requisition for our supper) make it impossible that I should write any more.

XXXI.

Return to Tunis—Our parting visits—Uncertainties.

Tunis, April 11th.

By the light of a lamp, the wick of which was formed of paper, in a very artistic manner by our hostess, and the very singular form of which put me in mind of the seven-branched candlestick at Jerusalem, I wrote the above lines; and now I proceed to relate the sequel of our excursion to Zowan.

The startling intelligence of the arrival of a steamer filled us, as I have already stated, with but one thought, namely, how to get back to Tunis with the utmost speed. We had enough to do to convince our people that we must start before daybreak. As these men are paid by the day on such excursions, they were very loath that we should return so soon, and particularly that we should insist upon departing at so early an hour, and thereby exposing ourselves to hostile attacks. Ali seemed greatly concerned to obtain his prophet's support on this hazardous occasion, for, whenever we called for him, the mameluke put his hands together, and gave us to understand that Ali was saying his prayers on the roof.

A strict Mohammedan must either attend public

worship five times a day, or say certain prayers as often; and this he may do in whatever place he may be, but only at certain appointed hours. Hence it is that Mohammedans are often to be seen in the act of prayer in the busiest thoroughfares, as well as in the most sequestered spots. Every prayer is preceded by a certain ablution, and, where water is wanting, the Mohammedan uses sand or earth instead of it; or he rubs his hand against a stone, and touches the part to be washed with it.

At last Ali had gratified the yearnings of his pious soul, and appeared before us with a serene visage to make the necessary arrangements for our speedy departure. If ever these lines fall into the hands of one who is about to travel, I hope that, for his own comfort's sake, they will induce him to carry with him every imaginable requisite in his excursion into the interior of Africa. What we suffered from not having been previously aware of the necessity of so doing, is not to be told. I have said enough about the two nights we spent in Zowan, and will add nothing more on that head. Above all things, it is necessary to have a clever servant, good mattresses, and everything

that can be wanted in the way of victuals. Literally and truly speaking, in spite of the Bey's rescript, nothing is to be got from his subjects by the traveller, except vermin. The wooden divans on which we lay were so hard that we could not sleep on them. No one can tell, until he has learned it from actual experience, what it is to be obliged to dispense with every thing in the way of comfort and convenience. When I asked Mrs. Roland wherefore, during her residence in Tunis, she had never made any excursions into the country, she replied that, from all she had heard, it was impossible to do so.

What seemed to us of all annoyances the most intolerable in this tour, was the total impossibility of ever being alone. Whatever one does, one may be sure of having half the population for spectators. I durst not, for instance, undress myself, for there was nothing but a curtain flapping to and fro, that served for a door, to separate me from the Sheik, the Sheik's son, our mameluke, hamba, and dragoman, and all the inhabitants of the town, who were congregated on our roof. It was a regular banquet, and an extremely picturesque

one; for, as we never touched the abundant dinner which was provided for us, it was consumed by our men, and by other guests invited by them; whilst our fat, bustling hostess, with her ugly daughters and servant-maid, ran to and fro, in hopes of earning a gratuity, and did nothing but drive us almost crazy.

It was about ten o'clock, when, after a long conversation touching the probability, or otherwise, of our arriving in Tunis before the departure of the steamer, we lay down on our hard couches, with the presumptous hope of snatching a little sleep. The roistering outside our room was kept up with unabated spirit, so that, instead of sleeping, I fell into an unpleasant state between dreaming and waking, in which I had to endure, in every conceivable form, the mortification of arriving too late for the steamer, until a no less alarming reality snatched me out of these imaginary sufferings. The rain was falling in torrents on the arched roof, filling us with anxious apprehension as to the possibility of our journey to Tunis. By day we were indebted to some broad chinks for the few rays of light that found their way into our

whitewashed room, and now we had to thank them in the dark hours of night for letting in a cooling flow of rain water upon us.

We lay down in woful anticipation that the next morning would be the commencement for us of a very toilsome day, but never dreaming of the disappointment that waited us. Though our men knew that we intended to start on our journey at half-past two, they were all asleep at that hour, and we had to perambulate the house like evil spirits, plucking and bawling at every one that fell in our way, before we succeeded in getting all the heavy sleepers on their legs. Fortunately the rain had ceased, but the sky was as pitch-dark as if it would never again be day-light; our poor horses, in spite of all our efforts, had not had a single grain of barley, and we ourselves had to content ourselves with the mere thought of a warm breakfast. It was under such auspices that we began a day's journey of fifty miles. At last our little caravan wound out of the court-yard, and we began to descend, in single file, the steep, narrow, boggy streets of Zowan. But the mameluke and the hamba did not accompany us, and when we asked Ali what business they had still to do with our late host, he told us that the

mameluke wanted to squeeze some twenty francs from the Jew, and the hamba stood by to have his share of that sum. Since these people expect to gain so much for so short a residence, one may pretty well conjecture what enormous sums would be charged to the Bey's account for our entertainment. The dispute was not settled in a few words, for it was a long while before the mameluke and the hamba came up with our party.

We pursued our way in the twilight, under blossoming trees, and when we reached the plain we fell into a good, steady trot. The nightingales sang deliciously, and their melodious strains seemed to me a good omen; we did not however slacken our pace to listen to them, but, as if dreading the fate of Lot's wife if we tarried, we rode on in silence, for the dread of being too late for the steamer lay with leaden weight upon our bosoms, and made us share in the silence that reigned all around. The mameluke and the hamba had overtaken us, but it was only to be left behind again, for they did not approve of our haste, nor could they make their poor horses keep pace with us. We trotted for seven good hours without ever pulling bit, sometimes over loamy ground, that was con-

stantly getting in the horses' feet, and endangering their falling; sometimes tormented by a violent sirocco, and thick clouds of dust. My horse cast two shoes, fell very lame, and was dead beat like the rest, so that it was with unspeakable delight we at last beheld the gates of Tunis. Long before we reached them, F—— perceived the English flag waving over our Consul's house, and as this signal is always displayed when there is an English steamer in the harbour, it was most welcome to us. F—— proceeded directly to the consulate, whilst T—— and I rode to the hotel, where we waited in no small anxiety for the report which F—— was to bring us from Sir Thomas Reade. He came at last, and this was the substance of what he had to tell us:—

"We can have very little hope," said he, "of a passage in the 'Locust,' the steamer that arrived yesterday. It is a very small vessel intended only for the rapid conveyance of despatches from one coast to another, and not at all for the reception of passengers. Being a Queen's vessel, it admits none, except by special order of the admiral, which is only given in behalf of ambassadors and other personages of high station. The captain, moreover, is a queer tempered fellow, and what might be hoped for from

a Frenchman's politeness is not to expected at the hands of an aristocratic Englishman. The captain has to-day repeatedly refused Mr. Davis a passage to Malta, though a request for it was backed by Sir Thomas Reade. Our good Consul has promised to do what he can for us, but I very much doubt that he will prevail on the captain to take us with him."

To-morrow we are to receive a definite answer, and as we have gone through much fatigue, and had little rest of late, I will endeavour to drown the anxious uncertainty of the interval in a sea of sleep, particularly as it will be very agreeable to renew my acquaintance with an European bed, and efface my recollections of the stony divans.

Abdellia, April 12th.

I need not say with what impatience we awaited a final answer from our Consul, as to whether the captain of the 'Locust' would take us on board. Mid-day was come, and we had not yet heard anything; this seemed to us no favourable sign, and our surmise was soon afterwards confirmed by a note from Sir Thomas Reade, stating that the 'Locust'

could not take any passengers, her only disposable cabin being occupied by a Captain Brook. How deeply T—— was cast down by this intelligence cannot easily be described. He stood in need of some amusement to enable him to forget his vexation, and therefore we resolved that very day to accept a long-standing invitation given us by our Consul to spend some days with him and his family in Abdellia. This suited T——'s views very well, for he still had hopes that our personal intercession would avail to soften the stony heart of the captain, who also was Sir Thomas's guest.

After an early dinner we drove out to Abdellia, and, contrary to our expectation, found the Consul's house so filled with guests, that I fear our visit must have come very inopportunely upon our good friend Lady Reade. In consideration of the guests, the dinner hour was put off from three o'clock to seven, and I shall never forget how annoyed I was, when I was informed that we must put ourselves into full dress for a late dinner, instead, as I had hoped, of enjoying the charms of nature on the beautiful African spring evening, without any change of toilette. How inconvenient in every way is our national custom of dressing late in the evening as

for a gala, in order to sit for two hours at a table loaded with dishes, and wear out the close of the day in pure ennui. How little idea have our countrymen of the true enjoyment of life, at least as I understand it, if they think it consists in the practice of such stiff etiquette.

Abdellia, April 13th.

About seven this morning Sir Thomas accompanied one of his guests, Captain Gower, of the 'Locust,' and his friend Captain Brook, to the Goletta, and soon afterwards we gathered all the fruits that accrued to us from our exertions in returning so hastily from Zowan; that is to say, we had the mortification to see the inhospitable 'Locust' make for Malta, under full pressure of steam and canvas, in the finest weather, and with the most favourable wind—for Malta, towards which our longing looks had been turned for many weeks, and whither no skipper will steer for us.

The party at Abdellia was otherwise considerably diminished; for, besides the two nautical gentlemen, the Consul's son had set out for Zowan before

day-break with a Mr. Blades; and whilst Sir Thomas was sitting to T—— for his portrait, and F—— was strolling about the neighbourhood, I conversed for some hours with the pretty and agreeable wife of the aforesaid Mr. Blades. This is the couple that arrived a few days ago at Tunis from Palermo, in their own yacht. As Mr. and Mrs Blades have no children, and are possessed of a pretty considerable fortune, they have never settled down on terra firma since their marriage, that is to say, for nearly fourteen years, but float about in their little cutter from port to port of the Adriatic and the Mediterranean, as the bee roams from flower to flower. In no other nation than the English, I believe, could instances be found of so singular a way of life. And a highly poetical way it is unquestionably, and I am persuaded that any one who, for fourteen years had led a life so full of movement and of continually renovated interest, could hardly be reconciled to any other. To one for whom knowledge has any charm, what can be more interesting than to be able to glance over every country like the pages of a book, and to know that it depends only on his own will whether he will make his sojourn on the coast of the Adriatic, or the

Mediterranean, or the British Channel? What a charm there is in the very thought of being able to roam all over the world in such perfect freedom and independence, carrying one's house about with one like a snail, and enjoying the pleasures of travelling, without being sorely subjected to the privation of common necessaries. The only thing, in such a way of life, that I think I should dislike, would be the impossibility of finding constant employment; for one could do nothing on the deck of so small a cutter, except in the calmest weather, and Mrs. Blades tells me that her fourteen years' sea-life has greatly developed her propensity for idleness. Last winter, Mrs. Blades lay in the port of Naples, and so close to the Mole, that she could step at once from the deck upon terra firma. How curious it must have seemed to its owners to return from the Opera to their yacht, or to dress in its little cabin for a grand ball.

Abdellia, April 14th.

Though I agree with Petrarch, when he says,

"Il sempre sospirar nulla rileva,"

still, I am shocked to remark that my sighs too readily form an accompaniment to T——'s diapason of groans, and that the frequent disappointments we have endured have rendered us prone to adopt some desperate course, ay, even to put ourselves on board the very first sailing vessel bound for Malta. The first news I had from Lady Reade this morning was, that the steamer which lay in the port of Tunis at the orders of the French Consul, had started a few hours before for Malta. Really, Fortune seems to have chosen us for the special subjects of her mocking tricks, since she dooms us to see a fresh steamer depart every day for Malta without us. A visit made to us by M. Logau, the French Consul, whilst we were away on an excursion to Zowan, led us to surmise that he intended to offer us a passage in his vessel; but, as I learned from Lady Reade, the departure of the 'Lavoisière' was caused by the

political troubles in France, and was so sudden that the merchants here had not even time to send a few lines by her; so we were obliged to make ourselves as contented as we could.

I devoted the greater part of this day to exploring the charming environs of Abdellia. Lady Reade and Mrs. Blades took me through paths enclosed by beautiful hedge-rows, and over fields decked with the brightest flowers, to the sea beach, which was as firm and dry beneath our feet as any in England. How very different a thing does a residence in this country appear when one can dwell in immediate intercourse with the glories of nature! Here I forget Tunis, with its indescribable filth, its horrible alleys, and all the abominations one encounters from the moment he finds himself within the town walls. I can even picture to myself a continuous residence in Tunis as very agreeable, when passed amidst a circle of dear friends.

I looked into the houses of some Moorish peasants, my guide being the youngest daughter of our Consul, a charming girl of seventeen, whose education is, happily, exempt from every trace of English stiffness, since she has been brought up free and unconstrained, like a Moorish maiden,

along with her younger brother, a fine handsome lad. The indications of comfort, and even of affluence, that I everywhere discovered in these houses, surprised me greatly; but in one of them we were near faring badly, for several dogs rushed at us open-mouthed. Having often seen how whole herds of Bedouin dogs had suffered themselves to be put to flight by the bold bearing of our little favourite, I imagined that a demonstration with my parasol would be enough to scare away our assailants; but I was mistaken, for they fell with concentrated fury upon my parasol, tore it to atoms, and would then have made short work with ourselves, had not their loud barking brought out the inhabitants of the houses to our rescue.

On our way back to the house with Lady Reade and Mrs. Blades, we were met by F——, who had just returned from Tunis, whither he had gone with the Consul. He brought us word that a brig would sail for Malta on the following Sunday, wind and weather notwithstanding; and, as a proof that he had already spoken with the captain, he produced a list of requisites to be taken with us, which in length might rival Leporello's list of his master's amours, and made the Consul exclaim,

with a laugh, "Do you mean to make a voyage to Jamaica?"

When Mrs. Blades was aware that our desire to revisit Europe was strong enough to make us brave all the discomforts that awaited us in a dirty little brig, she was inconsolable; for she assured us nothing could give her husband greater pleasure than to carry us in his yacht to Malta. But he is now shooting boars, jackals, and hyænas in the neighbourhood of Soliman, and I fear that, in spite of the most uninviting description Mrs. Blades gives us of merchant vessels in general, we shall after all be constrained to resort to the Giuseppina.

Tunis, April 15th.

The steamer from France had arrived; at seven in the morning, the table in the Consul's drawing-room was heaped with newspapers, and a dead silence prevailed whilst each of us sat, journal in hand, devouring the fortnight's accumulation of news. The breakfast-bell withdrew us for awhile from our interesting occupation, but we returned

to it again with renewed zest; and the carriage that was to convey us to Tunis was kept waiting for hours at the door before we could tear ourselves from the table, whereon lay the recorded details of the European convulsion. The very facts we read only the more excited our eager desire to depart; and when we drove back to Tunis, it was with the settled determination to embark in the first sailing vessel for Malta.

We spent the remainder of the day in taking leave of our friends; for we had arrived in Tunis as strangers, and without a line of recommendation, and we were now about to quit that hospitable colony as members of this little European society. "How do you go to Malta?" was the first question put to us by everybody we visited; and the next was, "What pressing necessity can there be for your going on board a sailing vessel, and exposing yourselves to discomforts, of which no one can have any conception but those who have actually endured them?" Some of the ladies spoke from personal experience, and the descriptions they gave were enough to disgust the most case-hardened traveller with such a project. The wife of the English Vice-Consul told me that she had once

been no less than three weeks on her passage between Tunis and Malta; that all the sailing vessels that plied to Malta took with them a freight of oxen, more or less; that the beasts were generally ranged on the deck as close as they could stand, and the filth and stench caused by them, were abominable. The export of cattle to Malta is a very lucrative branch of trade for the Tunisians, and the Bey has made a contract with the English Government to supply oxen for the garrison of the island, at a fixed price. "Besides that I was prevented by the oxen, that obstructed all the deck," continued Mrs. F., "from quitting the very close cabin in which I was almost stifled; I had immediately over my head a number of criminals, who were on their way to Malta to be executed; and if ever the bellowing and trampling of the oxen ceased for a few minutes, the pause only enabled me to hear more distinctly the clanking of the irons on the unfortunate criminals, and their bawling and cursing, and to terrify me with the thought that they might get loose and murder us all."

Such were the comforting communications made to us to-day at our leave-taking visits. Our last visit was to the French Consul: it was late when we

called upon him, and we found him at table with his daughter and some friends; nevertheless, he insisted on our coming in, and he made us acquainted with M. Gaspary, the French Vice-consul. This gentleman resides in La Goletta, and could give us the best information about the various outward-bound vessels. He strongly dissuaded us from going in the 'Giuseppina,' which was a small vessel and very old; on the other hand, he recommended us to choose the 'Scipio,' a large new Austrian vessel, which is likewise to sail to-morrow; so here we are in all the torments of uncertainty. We have almost given our word to the captain of the 'Giuseppina,' but then we might redeem it at the cost of a few dollars; our only fear is that the 'Scipio' is not really ready for sea. Meanwhile, we are packing up as if we were actually to commit ourselves to-morrow on board the so-much-decried 'Giuseppina,' to the swelling billows, for there is a brisk wind, and if it holds, we may be in Malta in thirty-six hours.

Tunis, April 16th.

The wind is still blowing briskly in our favour, but there are mischievous spirits at work against us; for the 'Giuseppina' does not sail until to-morrow evening, and in the firm belief that the 'Scipio.' would not sail earlier, we somewhat relaxed the vigour of our preparations. But how great was our surprise, when we heard from M. Logau's *homme d'affaires*, that the 'Scipio' was already out of the channel of the Goletta, and was only waiting in the roads for the evening land-breeze to begin her voyage for Malta? Had we but known this a couple of hours sooner, we should already by this time have been on our way to La Goletta; but now it is too late, and so one vessel after another slips away under our noses, without doing us any good. Truly, it appears to be written in the book of our destiny, that we must make acquaintance with the fine qualities of the 'Giuseppina.'

XXXII.

The Giuseppina—The Voyage—Arrival in Malta.

April 17th.

How heartily our friends would laugh, if they could have a peep into our room! There are three

mattresses lying on the ground, and round us provisions for at least a month. The room looks like a victualling magazine, and we are busy packing meat, bread, eggs, tea, coffee, sugar, cheese, biscuits, all sorts of things, in short, into four gigantic panniers, like those which are fixed on the backs of camels. Our friend T—— meanwhile looks as if his death-warrant was already signed; he is at present lying at full-length on the ground, breaking sugar.

News has been this moment brought us that the 'Giuseppina' will not sail before evening; so we shall have the more time to arrange our domestic matters; but I cannot help laughing at our ill-luck, for since we began to make the last preparations for our departure, the wind has shifted, and has now become quite contrary. This fact is the more remarkable, since at this season of the year, as M. Logau says, the wind blows from the west eight days out of seven; and under such circumstances the passage from Tunis to Malta is usually very rapid. But I have no time now for writing; I must finish packing, and help our friend T—— in the domestic concerns, to which he is applying himself with much zeal.

Malta, April 23rd. Easter Sunday.

At last T—— had got through with his great sugar-loaf, and reduced it, not without exertion, into a heap of neat little nodes; but that did not end all, and until our departure for La Goletta, the whole day was passed in such intellectual occupations. Mr. Lindon was so good as to spend with us the last hours of our stay in Tunis. He gave us a couple of letters of introduction for Malta, shared our hurried repast, and left us with a cordial shake of the hand, and hearty good wishes for our safe arrival. As soon as he was gone, he sent me, by the hands of his servant Mohamed, a magnificent *bouquet monstre* of the finest flowers. Delighting as I do in flowers, my heart bled at the mere thought that this exquisite nosegay must share my dismal lot in the dim hole of the 'Giuseppina'—for cabin I could not call the room assigned to us. No present is more welcome to me than that of a flower, be it a camelia or the simplest corn-flower; and even the most unpretending blossom offered to me by the cold hand of a stranger is gratifying to me, for the belief that it implies that I can prize such gifts. I looked with pity then on the fine

carnations, roses, and orange-blossoms; for, alas! I knew that in taking them with me on board the dirty 'Giuseppina,' I condemned them to premature death, and yet with their last breath they would cheer my dull hours.

But the moment of our departure was come, and our home became filled with covetous porters, who tried to squeeze as many piastres out of us as possible. The Swedish Consul's dragoman, who had always attended on us, told us that all was ready, both the coach, which was "*più meglio di quella del console inglese,*" and the cart on which our baggage was piled. Had the wind been only a little more favourable, we should have left Tunis with much lighter hearts; but a contrary wind was blowing strongly from the east, and the silence that prevailed amongst us plainly indicated that the question where we should pass the night, if the 'Giuseppina' did not sail, was an unsolved riddle for each of us.

We made our way, for the last time, through the concourse about the marine gate, stepped into our carriage, and turned our backs on old Tunis. The cart jolted on before us with our goods and chattels, over the rugged road; and at the sight of

our blue and white-checked mattresses, that went before us as warning momentoes of the many miserable hours we were in all probability about to spend upon them, I could not help laughing at our situation. Whenever in my travels I had fallen in with poor people who were roving, gipsy-like, from land to land with their whole property, I had regarded them with the deepest sympathy; but now I had to bestow all my compassion upon ourselves.

Tunis and its environs had not only afforded us many interesting sights, but had also given us opportunities to make many interesting acquaintances; nay, we had been received by all the European families there on the footing of near relations, and never shall I forget the friendly treatment I have received from them; and yet, for all that, I left the place without the least regret. During the latter part of my stay in it, I was too unwell, being tortured incessantly, day and night, with the most violent headache, not to wish myself with all my heart in Rome, that I might consult my physician; but even if this motive had been wanting, my longing for news from all who were dear to me at home would have counteracted all the attractions of

Africa. I did not for a moment regret our seven weeks' captivity in the old capital of the old Beylick, but neither would I have willingly consented to its prolongation for a single day. Though usually I never can leave the most insignificant spot without my heart being rent at the thought of never seeing it again, yet on this occasion I experienced no feeling of the kind. The only way in which I can account for this is, that I cherish a decided purpose to return very soon to Africa.

We reached La Goletta in time, that is to say, the gate which is always closed about six o'clock was still open. Our carriage stopped in the square, and in a few minutes half the town, the population of which consists of ragged soldiers, was assembled round us. F—— stepped out to inquire whether, in spite of the south-west wind, which was dead against us, the captain of the 'Giuseppina' still proposed to sail that evening; and, for my part, I was prepared to hear that the thing was not to be thought of, and that we should have to cast ourselves upon the hospitality of Sir Thomas Reade or of M. Gaspary. "Well, what are we to do?" I eagerly inquired of F——, as he came out of the house. "We are to embark," he replied, motioning at the same time to

the drivers to approach as near as they could to the canal; "I have just been speaking with the captain's brother, and he expects that a land-breeze will spring up about eight o'clock, which will enable us to sail out of the bay." A roomy boat, with two large sails, lay waiting for us in the canal. To freight it with our baggage was the work of a few minutes; we stepped in after them, and then might we exclaim, "*Jacta est alea!*"

It was a beautiful evening; the atmosphere had a transparent brilliancy, such as is only known to those coasts, and at this season of the year. The evening breeze blew softly, but there was a heavy swell occasioned by the violent winds of the last few days, and our boat danced and flew over the billows in a way that few shore-going folks would have thought agreeable. Besides the sailors in the boat, who were busy enough handing the sails and steering, there was one who sat still, and did nothing. I was struck by the wretchedness of his dress. His cotton night-cap pulled over his deep-set eyes; his coat, which was made up of nothing but patches, not a particle of the original cloth remaining; and the rest of his garments corresponding to his coat, left me in doubt to what class of beggars I should con-

sider him as belonging. I asked F—— who the man was. "That," said he, "is Don Paolo, the captain's brother." Heaven help us, thought I to myself, if we may judge of the 'Giuseppina' from this sample of her crew!

It was more than an hour after sunset when we at last reached the vessel, which was a small craft of eighty tons. Whilst the boat was dashed violently by the high waves against the 'Giuseppina's' side, a slender rope ladder was let down from the latter as the only means for me to climb on board. I made many desperate attempts to clutch it, which were all defeated by the heaving of the boat; at last I succeeded, though I cannot tell how. Fortunately the sides of the vessel were not very high, and in a few minutes we were all in our watery habitation, and saw our baggage hoisted in. I was in the act of peeping down the hold when I heard T. crying out for help, in a way that made me fear some accident had happened to himself or to one of the crew. "What is the matter?" I asked in alarm. "Oh," said T., "the lock of your band box has given way, and its whole contents are now become wear for fishes, not for you." Though this was not very agreeable news, still I could not help laughing heartily to see

the sailors busy fishing up Parisian caps, bonnets, habit-shirts, collars, &c., out of the waves. The whole salvage was crammed into the band-box, and to the present moment I know not how much I have shared with the African fishes.

Various domestic duties had now to be attended to. First of all our fowls were to be delivered to the sailor who assumed the style and title of cook; and then our mattresses were to be laid in the place where we were to pass the night. The sails were there just then, but they were taken out, for Don Paolo seemed to have received specific information from Æolus, and spoke of a certain land-wind which was to rise at eight o'clock and blow us away, with as much confidence as he reckoned on his dish of maccaroni. If I must describe the 'Giuseppina' more closely, it must be on one condition, namely, that my words, however incredible they may seem, shall be received with implicit trust.

> Se tu sei or, lettore, a creder lento
> Ciò ch 'io dirò, non sarà maraviglia
> Chè io che 'l vid, appena il mi consento.

Our sleeping-place was a cabin on the deck, made of thin boards, and divided into six compartments.

This chamber, if so it may be called, was, at the utmost, four feet high, so that only a dwarf could stand upright in it. The berths were so small, that our mattresses were much too large for them, though we had very small ones made on purpose. We had no choice left us, however; so each of us took possession of one of the upper berths, whilst the three lower ones were filled with a part of our baggage and our provisions. Only one of us at a time could sit at table in our gloomy cabin, and that only on condition of being doubled together, like the blade and handle of a knife. I was quite disheartened at the thought that I might be squeezed and tossed about for many days; nay, perhaps weeks, in such a narrow gloomy box.

By the time we had finished arranging our things, the night had spread a veil over our discomforts, and put an end to further investigation. The moderate wish to have something, no matter what, to sit down upon, that I might turn a farewell gaze upon the glorious African sky, was the only one that animated my bosom; but it was a vain aspiration. Nothing was to be had on board the 'Giuseppina' in the shape of a seat; nothing, indeed, but the most abominable filth and

legions of vermin of all sorts. The heaving of the ship prevented the possibility of making tea; to attempt it would have been as idle as to ask Don Paolo for East Indian bird's nests; so, on the whole, there remained nothing but to submit to our melancholy lot.

It was now eight o'clock by our watches. The bright moon rose majestically in the sky, but of the promised land-wind and our immediate departure, there was as yet no manner of sign. We were told that the land-wind was only retarded, and that it would not fail at ten o'clock to waft us out of the bay. Amused by these promises, we resolved to creep into our berths. To undress was out of the question, for a whole host of unbidden guests would have seized the opportunity to fatten on our blood. After many ineffectual efforts, rendered the more ineffectual by convulsive laughter, I contrived to squeeze myself into my berth, which was so fashioned that one had to lie quiet in it just as one chanced to get in, for stretching or turning was out of the question. I felt like one buried alive; and it was not long before I was aware of a voracious legion that assailed me. Afterwards, I fell into a sort of lethargic

fever-dream, out of which I was roused in a few hours by the noise of weighing anchor. It may have been about two in the morning when I heard the welcome token of departure. My wish to make the voyage to Malta, per sailing vessel, was not yet extinguished by the discomforts that I had hitherto endured; but significant groans from F——'s and T——'s catacombs, gave me plainly to understand, that if the next morning did not find us actually under sail, the word would forthwith be, "Back with us to land."

The prospect of our departure soothed me into a light slumber, from which I was suddenly awakened, by what was to me, an inexplicable phenomenon. By the dying light of a most unfragrant lamp, I saw F—— laying about him lustily with his stick. "What, in the name of heaven, are you fighting with so desperately?" cried I. "I am striving," he replied, laughing, "to save what remains of our provisions, on which, perhaps, we shall have to subsist for a long while, from the claws of a flock of tailless cats; for such is the penury of this vessel, that the very cats on board are denied that natural ornament." The threatened danger to our provisions gave me

little concern, and I fell asleep again; but how great was my astonishment on waking in the morning to find that we were still lying at anchor by the Bay of Tunis. It was about seven o'clock when we crept out of our lair in no very good humour, as the captain might plainly perceive in our looks. The moment he saw us, all possible preparations were again made for our departure; the anchor was weighed and the sails were spread. But it was to no purpose, the wind would not come; it was a dead calm, the sails hung heavily against the masts; whilst not a hand-breadth of shade could we find against the scorching rays that shone down vertically upon the dirty deck.

All I could have for my toilette was a glass of muddy water, and our breakfast consisted of coffee like chocolate, cooked for us by one of the dirty sailors, and some bread which the cats had been good enough to leave us after they had well perfumed it. F—— and T—— were strongly disposed to go back to land, and give up such a mad scheme as a voyage in the 'Giuseppina.' It is but justice to our sex to own that we have more perseverance than the opposite one, and I prevailed on my companions not to be so easily disheartened.

As the captain found that his sailing demonstrations were in vain, and that the wind would not be conjured to rise, he let the anchor drop again. F—— went with Don Paolo to La Goletta to inquire the opinion of impartial people as to the weather, since for fourteen hours we had heard nothing from the ship's company, but *Partiamo, partiamo, andrem paasseggiando, &c. &c.* He returned in a couple of hours with some fresh bread, and whatever else he could find in La Goletta, to render our situation on board less intolerable. About noon it seemed as if a faint breath of air was really stirring in our favour. The anchor was weighed for the third time; all sails were again set; and this time the 'Giuseppina' actually began to move slowly over the blue waves; and were it not that the dread of new sufferings which awaited us, lay heavy on our hearts, the last hours of this day would have seemed to me altogether very agreeable; but night brought with it a renewal of our sea sorrows. Of these I shall make no further mention, than to say that for three days and two nights we were miserably tossed about by contrary winds, without ever losing sight of Cape Bon or the island

of Zembra. The water outside the bay was s agitated that our poor craft always lay quite aslant on the one side or the other. Exhausted by the most violent sea-sickness, we all lay in our sleeping-holes, whilst our provision baskets flew wildly about, and hundreds of oranges, lemons, eggs, &c. &c., all smashed and jumbled together, formed a greyish omelette on the black floor. There was no compassionate hand to offer us a glass of water, for the crew consisted of but four sailors and one fine little lad, who should have waited on us but could not do so; for every time we asked for him we were told that he was gone aloft. As for Don Paolo and the captain, the only attention they paid us was to put their heads in at the door by turns to ask what the time was, for neither of them had anything in the shape of a watch. Nor did they appear to be on the best understanding with the compass, for they were constantly knocking at it, whereat I expressed my surprise to Don Paolo. "Oh!" said he, "the vessel knows her way so well to Malta that she runs straight for it without steering, just like a horse to his stable."

It was full moon on Thursday evening, and I observed that it rose as red as blood; the sea was

like seething pitch, and the louring sky threatened the most violent tempest. The weather grew worse and worse all night, and I began to think I should pay dearly for my obstinacy in insisting on this trip. The noise made by the wind and the sails, that flapped about in all directions, was terrific; and I thought our crazy bark could not hold out against such a buffeting. Bitterly did I reproach myself for not having acquiesced in what F—— and T—— had proposed; but, as Macbeth truly remarks,

> Come what may,
> Time and the hour run through the roughest day.

On Friday morning the wind shifted, and carried us into certain currents, which, as Don Paolo asserted, superseded all need of the compass. The little 'Giuseppina' began to do her best, and to sail as well as her bad build allowed; and when we woke on Sunday morning we saw the islands of Gozo and Comino, and by and by the long-wished for Malta was in sight! It was like a dream to us. The wind was quite in our favour, and the motion of the vessel very agreeable. It was one of the most imposing moments I ever

experienced when the 'Giuseppina' glided with full spread canvass, in the loveliest weather, into the harbour of La Valletta crowded with steamers, merchantmen, and ships of war; for at that very instant all the bells, which had been silent since Good-Friday began to peal joyfully, in honour of the Saviour's resurrection, and cannon and musketry resounded in token of the feelings that pervaded all Christendom at that impressive hour.

Was it tenderness that overcame me at the first sound of the bells—a sound I had not heard for months? Was it joy to know that I was so near my beloved Italy? Was it gratitude to a merciful Providence, that had sustained me through so many dangers, and brought me back safe into the home-like harbour? Or was it, perhaps, a painful feeling of repugnance that filled my heart at finding myself about to bend once more beneath the irksome yoke of European life? I cannot tell; only I know that emotions the most varied, the sweetest, and the saddest, agitated my bosom, and could find no relief but in a flood of tears. There lay the long-sighed-for Malta, in its highest splendour, before our gaze; a portion of proud Albion was there, in its invincible majesty. A squadron of England's most magnificent

war-ships gave life to the great harbour, into which we sailed humbly, in our dirty little 'Giuseppina.' From the flag-ship, the 'Hibernia,' down to the most ordinary bark, every vessel was gaily adorned with bright parti-coloured flags. The glowing summer weather gave additional lustre to the scene; the very air breathed joy and gladness; but whether they found an echo in my heart, I will not say. I felt like a school-boy at the end of his holidays, when he bids farewell to home, and goes back to the drudgery of school. Ay, the wild raging sea, with all its terrors, and the desert plains of the Barbary coasts, had in brief time become dear homes to me, and methought an inward voice whispered to me, "Ill wilt thou endure the constraint of the petty usages of civilization, after thy recent taste of freedom."

After the 'Giuseppina' had come to her moorings, we left her with much heavier hearts than we had embarked in her six days before: it was a farewell, an eternal farewell, perhaps, to fair Africa, Algiers, Blidah, Philippeville, Constantin, Bona, Guelma—ay, even Tunis and the memorable Zowan. These all belong now to the past; but the recollection of the precious hours I spent in them remains

with me. But is it not a very sad truth that time, like the blanching sunshine, effaces the hues of our remembrances; and that the present, which yet we so seldom know how to value, always asserts the strongest claims upon us? My mind's eye was still turned wistfully towards Africa, and was very loath to dwell upon war-stirred Europe.

But now to pay our parting compliments to the 'Giuseppina.' She has carried us fairly and safely, though as we look at her from our boat, we cannot help exclaiming, "Is it possible we can have been so fool-hardy as to risk our lives in such a craft?" And now but a few strokes of the oar, and we reach the white chalky landing-place; therefore Africa, 'Giuseppina,' and all belonging to you, farewell!

XXXIII.

Once more in Europe.

April 25th.

We are actually then in Malta; we are actually in the old knightly island, where Africa and Europe seem to take each other by the hand—each land preserving something of its own individuality, and yet the whole presenting a quite peculiar character. To-morrow morning we start for Civita Vecchia,

on board the French war steamer 'Le Mentor.' We have employed the few days of our stay here in renewing our acquaintance with this interesting island, and also with the manifold comforts which the English have transplanted to this bare rock, and which are most welcome to travellers newly arrived from the East; but how unavailing are they all to still my yearning after my favourite plains and their grave inhabitants! Now that I have received a copious supply of letters from all friends at home, I would much rather embark again in the 'Giuseppina' than in the 'Mentor;' and, if I am not mistaken, I can read the same feeling in friend T——'s countenance likewise.

I say nothing of Malta, because there are many published descriptions that give a truer picture of this singular island than my feeble pen could execute. Besides, we this time rather glanced slightly, like *blasé* travellers, at the lions of old Malta than closely scrutinized them. As usual, one meets with English people at every step; fair-haired, rosy-cheeked English children are seen in the care of swarthy, black-eyed daughters of Africa, like white lambs nursed by tigresses of the desert—to use Lamartine's striking comparison; English officers, mounted on noble

Arab horses, ride along the Via Grande, where swarm a promiscuous throng of all nations; and still the untiring Maltese, in red scarf and cap, runs beside his strong Barbary nag, as it draws the peculiar two-wheeled car of the country swiftly and noiselessly along the Macadamised street. By the shores are heard characteristic Greek, Sicilian, and Maltese melodies; and on the terraces, shaded with trees, handsome Spanish women and bronzed Italians strike up the Andalusian fandango, and the exciting tarantella with guitar and castagnets. Malta, the seductive queen of the Mediterranean, retains all her charms unaltered; and while she surrounds the traveller with all the comforts of cleanliness and the most refined civilization, she makes him acquainted with the magnificent skies of Africa, which are to be his sole compensation for many a privation to be endured on his journey further south.

It was a beautiful morning. At six o'clock, when we proceeded to the Porto Grande, to embark in the 'Mentor,' the town was already in full bustle. What a difference between our present embarcation

and that at La Goletta!—with what feelings of confidence did we step on board the 'Mentor,' which is certainly one of the largest steamers I ever was in. The brightly-polished brasses that met the eye in every direction, the clean flooring, composed of very narrow planks, the orange-trees in blossom on the deck; everything, in short, betokened military order, neatness, and punctuality. What a triumph of human invention and industry is such a splendid steamer! Exactly at seven o'clock the 'Mentor' began to move slowly and majestically, like a noble swan. When we had cleared the harbour, a good deal of canvas was spread, for the wind was favourable, and in a short time the low rocky island of Malta looked like a white speck on the dark-blue surface of the sea. Our gaze was now turned towards fair Parthenope, where, according to the last accounts we had received, so much blood had been shed; and sad was the thought, that, after our foreign travel, our first steps on European ground, where perfect peace had reigned at our departure, should be on a soil soaked with recent blood. Filled with such painful reflections, I took little notice of my fellow-passengers, and it was not until evening that

we entered into conversation with them, when Ætna, lighted by the setting sun, compelled us all to join in one common voice of admiration.

We made acquaintance with an agreeable Sardinian colonel, who was on his way to Turin to fight against Austria, with a no-less interesting Frenchman, M. de Barante (son of the literary *pair de France* of that name,) whom the political changes had removed from his place as secretary to the embassy at Constantinople; and with the commander of the 'Mentor,' a very agreeable man, who had formerly been adjutant to the Prince de Joinville. As the latter was very fond of music, we spent some delightful hours at the piano, after the night air had grown too cold for us to remain on deck.

We lay for some time off Messina, waiting for a steamer that was to exchange despatches with us; and when we came on deck next morning, we had already passed the Straits of Messina and the fine bold coasts of Calabria. We had a very distant view of Stromboli, rising abruptly from the waves—Stromboli, that continually assails its four hundred inhabitants with ashes and lava, and yet cannot expel them from its hospitable surface. On the second

night, a part of the Neapolitan fleet, consisting of six steamers, passed us like dark shadows, conveying troops to Venice.

We had a pretty strong wind in our favour all the way from Malta, and when we came on deck, on the morning of the 28th, we found ourselves in the harbour of Naples. However lovely the clime from which one returns, however the eye may have been satiated with the natural beauties of remote lands, still methinks the noble, the unique Parthenope must fill with rapture the heart of every feeling traveller. So, at least, it was with me when I returned from Constantinople four years ago, and so it was now; and though the Italians are used to say "Veder Napoli poi morir," I, for my part, would exclaim, "Go see Naples, not to die, but to conceive a thorough sense of the joy of life."

As soon as it was possible we landed, and early as it was, we hastened to visit our common friend Consul M——. It was with no little surprise he beheld us arrived from Malta, for he had heard that we were making a tour of Spain on horseback. He received us with his usual kindness. The few

hours we were permitted to spend with him passed like minutes; and to lengthen them, if possible, he accompanied us back to the 'Mentor.' The anchor was weighed again, and after a delightful trip, we arrived on the following morning in the little harbour of Civita Vecchia. No swarm of facchinis, or greedy boatmen fell upon our baggage; a different spirit seemed to have possessed the whole population; on every breast was to be seen the red, white, and green revolutionary cockade; in every hat was stuck the feather, dyed with the colours of freedom; and the usually deserted streets of the little town of Civita Vecchia were enlivened by various groups of military men and citizens conversing together. Alas! I must confess I felt heavy at heart. Gladly would I have returned on board the 'Mentor,' with all that were dear to me, to Africa, to pleasant Bona, or to the majestic environs of Tunis. But these were impracticable dreams, and I bade them farewell. Our immediate business for the moment was to avail ourselves of the *lascia passare* sent us by our good friend the Minister K——, by virtue of which our baggage was exempted from inspection by the

custom-house officers. This was soon done, and before it struck twelve, our carriage was rattling at full speed along the sea-shore, in the direction of the Eternal City.

THE END.

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